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# **GRACE DARLING AND HER TIMES**

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GRACE HORSLEY DARLING

*Portrait painted at the Longstone lighthouse by T. Musgrave Joy.  
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# GRACE DARLING AND HER TIMES

By  
**CONSTANCE SMEDLEY**  
(MRS. MAXWELL ARMFIELD)

With Foreword by  
**COMMANDER STEPHEN KING-HALL**

WITH 24 ILLUSTRATIONS AND MAP

SECOND IMPRESSION

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LIGHTKEEPERS  
AND  
LIFEBOATMEN**

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## FOREWORD

**T**HOUGH nearly a hundred years have elapsed since Grace Darling the lighthouse keeper's daughter first sprang into fame, this is the first full dress biography of the lady which has been written. It is safe to say that it can hardly be superseded, for Miss Smedley has made a most exhaustive study of all the available material in connection with the short life of her heroine. One of the results of the minutely detailed treatment adopted in this book is that the authoress creates a background of the times which is of great interest and makes the book much more than a narrative of the short life of a girl who by her deeds in connection with the rescue of the survivors of the *Forfarshire* received a degree of publicity which, though it would be a commonplace to-day, was astounding in the early years of the nineteenth century.

At the time of her exploit steam transport at sea was in its infancy, and the medieval system of the private lighthouse finally died when the Corporation of Trinity House by the Act of 1836 was given control of the English coastal lights with certain supervisory powers over various local lighting authorities, although, of course, the connection between Trinity House and lights for mariners started as far back as 1565.

It was also at about this time, on March 4th, 1824, to be precise, that Sir William Hilary, Bart., founded the Royal National Institution for the Preservation of Life from Shipwreck—better known to men to-day as the Royal National Lifeboat Institution. Though patronized by the King, blessed by the Archbishop of Canterbury, and with the silver-tongued Wilberforce pleading its cause, this great society started its career with less than £10,000 in its coffers.

Twenty-six years before the foundation of this society the north-east coast of England had given birth to some of the very early lifeboats built to the order of the Duke of Northumberland and the design of Greathead, the South Shields boat-builder.

Not only, therefore, did Grace Darling's exploit coincide in time with what we might perhaps describe as a period when there was a nascent interest in Safety First at sea, but it also took place at a part of our storm-beaten coasts where there lived both the men with the practical knowledge needed for the solution of the technical problems involved and also the Dukes who could provide the patronage necessary as much in those days as to-day for the successful pushing forward of a campaign to rouse public opinion.

There had in fact been considerable progress since the foundation of the Royal Humane Society in 1773 which, as a Duke of Northumberland



observed in a letter dated 1838, was in its early stages deemed a dangerous institution formed to oppose and disturb the divine decrees of Providence who had ordained for various individuals death by drowning and accident. Nevertheless it is always uphill converting the British public, and to the reformers Grace Darling's exploit was an incident which could and was used to kindle the imagination of the people. Perhaps the most interesting chapters in this book are those which give an insight into how publicity expressed itself a century ago. That Grace Darling did achieve notoriety, unprecedented in those days, is clear both from the pages of this book and from the fact that even to-day the memory of this simple, sensibly minded girl still flourishes to a considerable extent in the nurseries and schools of our land.

COMMANDER STEPHEN KING-HALL.

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## SOURCES AND TRIBUTARIES

THE unreliability of existing biographies of Grace Darling, other than the brief memoir *The True Story* compiled by her sister Thomasin and Mr. Daniel Atkinson, seems to call for an accurate presentment of fact, rather than a story that is in any way unsubstantiated. This book, therefore, aims to be a faithful documented record, largely made up of dated letters, extracts from Journals, and contemporary newspaper reports, together with such historical data and comment as serve to bring out their significance.

Information has been sought from existing descendants of the Darling and Horsley families and their friends, the present representatives of the families of the 3rd Duke and Duchess of Northumberland, and many who are or have been connected with the County; and the grateful thanks of the Author are due to the Marchioness of Aberdeen and Temair and Lady Amptill for valuable introductions; Her Grace the Duchess of Northumberland for her generous and able help throughout; to Lady Victoria Percy; to the relatives of the Duchess Charlotte Florentia—the Earl of Powis, Mrs. Williams Wynn and Major Peel—for the loan of letters; to Lord Armstrong, Chairman of the Crewe Trustees, the Venerable R. R. Magin, Archdeacon of Lindisfarne, Mr. and Mrs. Collingwood Thorp and the Rev. and Mrs. Charles Thorp.

To Mrs. Roberts, Mr. and Mrs. William Dixon, Miss Grace Horsley Darling, Mrs. Haigh, Mrs. Dunnet, Mr. John Air, and Mr. T. Grey, descendants of the Darling and Horsley families; to Trinity and Lloyd's; to Lieut.-Col. Satterthwaite, O.B.E., Captain Drury, Captain Oliver and Mr. Charles Vince of the Royal National Lifeboat Institution, Major F. A. C. Claughton of the Royal Humane Society, and Mr. Gerald Maude of the Shipwrecked Mariners Society; to Mr. Lewis Ross and Mr. Hugh Stephenson, Hon. Secretaries of the North Sunderland and Boulmer branches of the R.N.L.I., and Mr. James Robson, Coxswain of the N.S. Lifeboat, and Mr. James Davis, chief lightkeeper at the Longstone, and Mr. Andrew Rutter, Trinity boatman to the Farnes.

To the Rt. Hon. Sir Charles and Lady Trevelyan; to Mr. Campbell Dodgson and the staff of the British Museum; Mr. John Oxberry, Hon. Secretary of the Society of Antiquaries, Mr. Anderton of the Public Library, Mr. T. Russell Goddard, Curator of the Hancock Museum, and Mr. Stevenson, Curator of the Laing Art Gallery, all of Newcastle-on-Tyne; to Mr. Normanton, Town Clerk of Berwick-upon-Tweed, and J. H. Craw, Berwickshire Naturalists Club; also Mrs. Gardner, J.P., Mr. Sheppard, Director of the Municipal Museum,

Mr. Bagguley, Head of the Public Libraries, and Mr. John Young, J.P., Hon. Secretary of the Port of Hull Society, all of Hull ; to Mr. Ralph Cowper, Manager of the Dundee, Perth and London Shipping Co., Mr. Gell, Director of Chance Bros. and Co., and Mr. B. Younghusband Stewart ; to Mrs. Beanland, Miss Norraby, Mrs. Sisson ; Captain Basil Hall, R.N., Dr. Wilson Burn, Mr. Crombie Rogers, Mr. John Gibb, Miss Winchester, Mrs. Swann (of Wheldon and Wesley), and last but not least the Misses Moore of North Sunderland ; and to Miss Violet Blake and my Husband together with many other friends and unknown correspondents.

**PART ONE**  
**HER HOME**



## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

### THE FARNES :

THE VIKINGS.	ST. AIDAN.	SIR JOHN CLAYTON.
KING IDA.	ST. CUTHBERT.	GEORGE BLAKE.
QUEEN BEBBA.	ST. BARTHOLOMEW.	FRANCIS LIDDLE.
KING OSWALD.	JAMES RAINE.	

### BAMBURGH :

LORD CREWE, BISHOP OF DURHAM.      ARCHDEACON SHARP.  
DOROTHY FORSTER.

### ALNWICK :

THE PERCIES, THE EARLS OF NORTHUMBERLAND.  
ELIZABETH BARONESS PERCY.  
THE THIRD DUKE OF SOMERSET.  
LORD HERTFORD.  
LORD BEAUCHAMP.  
{ LADY BETTY, BARONESS PERCY.  
SIR HUGH SMITHSON.  
THE FIRST DUKE AND DUCHESS OF NORTHUMBERLAND.  
THE SECOND DUKE HUGH.  
THE THIRD DUKE HUGH AND HIS HALFBROTHER ALEXANDER SMITHSON.

### BAMBURGH :

SIR ROGER DE HORSLEY.  
MR. AND MRS. JOB HORSLEY.  
THOMASIN HORSLEY  
ALEXANDER HORSLEY  
MARGARET HORSLEY (MRS. MARTIN) } Their children.  
ROBERT HORSLEY  
GEORGE HORSLEY

### THE FARNES :

MR. AND MRS. ROBERT DARLING.  
MR. AND MRS. WILLIAM DARLING.  
WILLIAM DARLING (the second)  
THOMASIN DARLING  
JOB HORSLEY DARLING  
ELIZABETH GRACE AND MARY ANN DARLING      Their children.  
ROBERT DARLING  
GRACE HORSLEY DARLING  
GEORGE ALEXANDER AND WM. BROOKS DARLING }

### BAMBURGH :

THE REV. ANDREW BOULT-SHARP.	BESSIE CRAWFURD.
MISS CATHERINE SHARP.	JAMES BLACKETT.
ELEANOR CARR (MRS. ROSS).	DR. FENDER.
CAPTAIN WINCHESTER.	ROBERT SMEDDLE.
JANE THOMPSON.	MRS. SMEDDLE.

### LIGHTHOUSES :

TRINITY BRETHREN.	CAPTAIN FULLERTON.
ARGAND.	JOSEPH NELSON.
BUFFON.	JOHN WHELDON.
CONDORCET.	JAMES LUKIN.
AUGUSTIN FRESNELL.	GENTLEMEN OF LAWES HOUSE.
ROBERT AND ALAN STEVENSON.	

### NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE :

BEWICK.	P. J. SELBY.
GEORGE ALLAN.	JOSEPHINE BUTLER.
JOHN AND ALBANY HANCOCK.	MRS. NORTON.
HENRY HEWITSON.	CHARLOTTE BRONTË.
WILLIAM HEWITSON.	JANE AUSTEN.
JOHN BRANDTING.	GEORGE ELIOT.
MR. HOPPER.	QUEEN VICTORIA.
FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE.	

## CHAPTER ONE

### MIST

**I**F you ask any man, woman, or child whether they have ever heard of Grace Darling, it is probable they will answer, Yes ; if you ask what they know about her, most of them will tell you, Nothing ; perhaps fifty per cent. will add that she had something to do with a wreck. The oldest may inform you she saved nine people from the *Forfarshire* in her little boat. If your curiosity is sufficiently aroused to seek for her biography, you will find nothing authoritative. If you go to the British Museum, you may read three or four books fictitious in narrative, and padded with imaginary conversations. If you go to other libraries you will find nothing. Grace's history with that of the two lighthouses where she lived, is shrouded in thick mist.

If you visited her birthplace in Northumberland (Bamburgh), you would find the memory of herself and her family remaining in people's minds "as through a glass, darkly." You would be told that if you had come fifteen or twenty years ago people were then living who remembered ; but they are now gone.

The desire to find out all about her came from such a visit and the discovery of wide unpopulated distances ; a coast almost uninvasioned by charabanc or bungalow ; stretches of hill and park land ; silence ; stillness ; above all, a great remoteness. In a Bamburgh farmhouse a collection of Grace's letters, simple and natural, in a fair and flowing script were found ; letters that took one right into the heart of that strange isolated life upon the Farnes. One was transported into the midst of a family in the reigns of George the Fourth and William the Fourth and the young unmarried Queen Victoria ; read just what they were thinking and feeling about each other and all the little homely problems of domestic lighthouse life. And there was Grace herself, amusing, cheerful, full of common sense and practical habits, her mind full of her family and her duties, but with never a hint of the triumphs and the great people ; scarcely a reference to the presents and honours except for a mysterious line or two about a brooch from a gentleman who (her sister will remember) came to see her, and a command to the sister to put this letter at once upon the fire. (Fortunately, if indiscreetly, not complied with.)

Then the search began ; to find out everything that could be known about everyone mentioned in the *Journal* and *True Story* and the letters ; to find more letters ; to trace the descendants of the Darling family and

everyone connected with the Darlings. As the work proceeded, one became aware that the time in which Grace lived saw the beginning of most of the industrial inventions in common use and almost all the organizations and institutions for the help of sailors ; and as one searched for facts about Grace Darling, figures and events of national interest came to light, as yet unchronicled in general history. Who knows that Grace Darling's deed led to great reforms in our Shipping Laws ? Who is aware that with the beginning of industrialism came the birth of humanitarian societies, and that Grace's deed was a mighty influence therein ? It was news to the present Northumberland family that she was the ward of the Third Duke ; but any information about the DUKES of Northumberland will be news to many. The textbook used in our schools as the official history of the Percies ends with the last EARLS of Northumberland ; every school child knows of their gallantry, their pride, and their misfortunes, but where is the history that gives the story of the restoration of the Percy glories in the Dukes of Northumberland a hundred years after the Earldom was extinct ?

Harrison Ainsworth refers to the " Duke " of Northumberland and Lady Jane Grey, in *The Tower of London*, whereas the line of Dukes did not begin till George the First's reign.

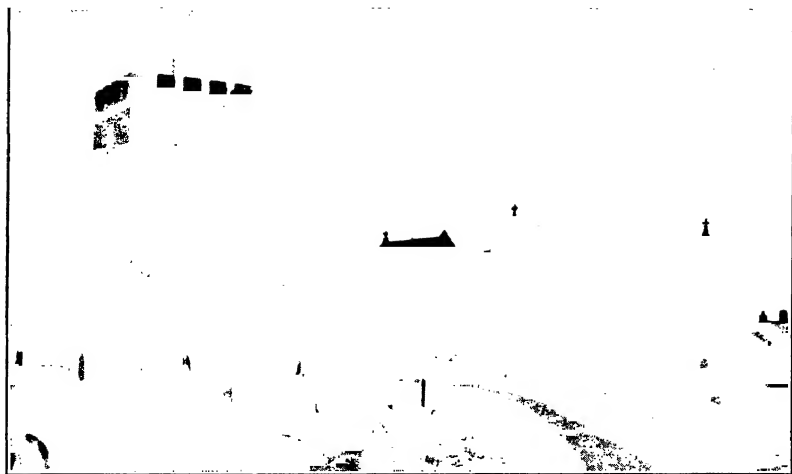
What a driving force came with the First Duke and what pioneers of reform in agriculture, army, navy, education and life-saving were his first descendants. The Soldier Duke, Hugh 2nd : the Scholar Duke, Hugh 3rd ; the Sailor Duke, Algernon ; all known to, and connected with the history of the Darlings.

But if the Dukes are of interest, what of the Third Duchess ? What history tells of the woman chosen to mould the character and supervise for seven years the education of the Princess Victoria when it became evident she would accede to the throne ?

A leading force in the beginning of natural history were the Northumbrian and Newcastle naturalists. Who thinks of Grace as taking part in their labours ? Or as the friend and model of the North country painters ? Who realizes the curious state of art in 1838 and its great public importance before the coming of photography ? And what fantastic liberties with Grace were taken by novelist and poet ?

1816-1840 was an age of beginnings. Not only of mechanical transport and communication but the beginning of consideration for the public welfare ; of recognition of women as thinkers, and of the Commonalty as thinkers too. How natural that such an age should see our first national heroine, a child of the people honoured by the Throne, by Trinity and Lloyd's, the Peerage and the cities. Grace Darling won her place in national esteem twenty years before Florence Nightingale became known at Scutari. For a hundred years Grace has been the only woman who has gained renown in life-saving by sea and she and her deed remain unique.

To understand her story one must hear of the wreck of the *Forfarshire* ; few disasters have ever stirred the public mind so deeply. The whole of Scotland and the North and Midlands rang with the news for ten days



ST. AIDAN'S CHURCH



*Photo: H. W. Gibb*

JOB HORSLEY'S COTTAGE AND GRACE DARLING'S GRAVESTONE



before Grace Darling's name was mentioned; she happened to be associated with a wreck that marked a crisis in maritime history, and the story of the wreck and its amazing sequence must be given in full, together with the rescue and its strange complications, for this minute cross-patterning of events explains the immense notoriety Grace achieved. The groundwork of it all is her birthplace and home on the shores of the North Sea, the isolated little town of Bamburgh and the mysterious Farnes.

This is not only a biography, but a history of out-of-the-way places, people and events, amongst which Grace's home and deed and fame shine out like a bright light illumining the dark seas of the Hungry 'Forties, turbulent with the coming waves of progress.

## CHAPTER TWO

### SUN AND SHADOW

AT 8 a.m. the twenty-fourth of November, 1815, Grace Horsley Darling, seventh child of William and Thomasin Darling, was born at Bamburgh.

To understand Grace, one must know something about the history and visualize this part of Northumbria, for Grace was a typical Northumbrian, and Northumberland is little known and little understood.

Bamburgh, now a modest village, is triangular in shape with the castle at the east end of the village forming the apex of the triangle, and the hill called Mizen Head and St. Aidan's church marking the north and south angles of the base. The low houses are shadowed by a grove of trees upon the Green. Even behind the castle walls Bamburgh bears witness to the violence of the northern gales. In the heart of the village the old trees testify to the force of the nor'-easters by the bareness of the topmost twigs, the bent of the branches, and the rake of the stems. One passes the grove and continues along the Belford road past a long wall of old red brick behind which is the Castle Garden. At one time this was part of the garden of the Austin Canons, whose cell or Monastic house stood on the site of the present Manor Farm just beyond and opposite to the Darlings' cottage. Three modest grey stone houses with beds of flowers beneath the windows are set behind a low stone border level with the pavement. The furthest of these is the home where Thomasin Darling bore her seventh child. The door has two steps up to it with two windows one above the other, rather taller than usual, and there is a kitchen lean-to by the side.

Immediately in front of the cottage is the wall of the churchyard with St. Aidan's tower rising solemnly above it; through the gate one sees the greenest of green grass, and behind the church the sea and the Farne Islands. The cenotaph erected in Grace Darling's honour is outlined against the deep blue waters, looking out towards the islands where she made her home. And almost in a straight line from the door of her birthplace her little gravestone stands.

Brilliantly blue the sky over this part of the coast, darkest blue the seas, golden-grey the warm stone of the church, and beyond the grass the Farnes gleam out in sudden flashes, dominating the peaceful solitude of sea and shore and sky.

For centuries untold these islands have been the haunt of sea birds, and the rocks of some of them rising sheer out of the waves, eighty feet high in places, are white with bird-droppings. On the Inner Farne to-day, the lighthouse, the light-keepers' cottages, the walls and buildings are also white, and from the churchyard, these scattered islands seem to thrust themselves in view with sinister effect for all their gleaming lights.

Few pass along the Belford road in late November. There is great quiet round this shadowed cottage whose windows facing the road catch no ray of light the winter through. Beyond the village over the treetops in the grove, Bamburgh Castle rises golden bright in the full glory of the winter sun which strikes directly on the battlements and the Keep behind them and the long wall. On account of some peculiar geological condition there is much sun on the fifteen miles of coast from Bamburgh southwards; one looks inland and sees mist and rain upon the Cheviots and the neighbouring lowlands, while here the shore and sea lie in a charmed area of sunlight; but during the winter half the houses in the village are in shadow, for the northern sun stays low in the heavens; only the church and the gravestones and the castle, towering high upon its basalt rock, catch and keep the light triumphantly ablaze.

And yet, in the fierce conflagration of the sunsets with their heavy clouds like giant wing feathers spreading low over the fields and dunes, burnished with strange metallic yellows or swirls of peach or apricot against the pervading pale green skies, there is latent savageness, while the inky rocks rising out of the glistening sand, bestrewn with pools that gleam with a wan light, breathe out unutterable loneliness. Day and night the beach lies deserted, fringing the desolate dunes.

This surpassing loneliness is felt not only at the close of day, but just as much through the quiet mornings when the church tower stands in unwinking bright relief against the seas on which so little shipping passes now; and through the long afternoons when scarce a footfall breaks the silence. Perhaps one gets this sense of a deserted place because of the domination of the Castle and the Church over this tiny group of cottages and farms.

Here the great pagan Ida came to found his kingdom of Bernicia; on that impregnable crag of black basalt, a hundred and eighty feet high, he built his fortress where the castle stands and named the city at its base Bebbanburgh in honour of his Queen, Bebb. Hence its name of Bamburgh.

The North Sea billows roll in on Bamburgh sands straight across from the Viking strongholds, and on the white foam rode the Vikings in their ships, to descend on the Northumbrian coast, ravish the women and leave descendants of their Viking blood. The old names of Bamburgh

persist throughout the centuries. Grace's mother came of one of the oldest local families ; it is more than probable that Grace was of Viking blood.

Ida at first triumphed completely over the Christian Britons. Here were fought great battles. Back and forth, victory came now to pagans, and then to Christian influence. Pagan rulers were converted. Finally, Oswald, an exiled prince of the old Bernician line, and a Christian, became king and summoned priests from Iona to teach his people. The monks returned to Iona, saying they could do nothing with the barbarous English. " Was it they who are hard of heart or ye, who asked too much of unlearned listeners ? " said the gentle Aidan, and came himself in 635 to live as the humblest herdsman and, with King Oswald as his interpreter, to instruct the people in the simple message of the Christian faith.<sup>1</sup>

The present church stands on the site of the chapel St. Aidan built. His own cell and chapel form the Crypt ; the reredos at the east end of the chancel shews Paulinus, Aidan, Finan, Cuthbert, Bede, the famous scribe, and Bartholomew. Grace was born and buried in the spot whence Northumbria was Christianized.

### CHAPTER THREE

#### GRACE DARLING'S HOME : THE FARNES

It is a brief passage across the Fairway, that pleasant stretch of tidal waters, so often deepest ultramarine beyond the ash-gold sand dunes, the emerald lawns studded with the silvery gravestones of Bamburgh, the white painted harbour at Seahouses. Not far as time or space are counted, and yet impassable gulfs of thought and habit, of influence and associations, divide the dwellers on the mainland from that curious territory that guards the coast and bares its teeth to the North Sea.

Each island has its ancient name, but the group is called both the Farne and Fern islands. Fearann or Ferunn is the Celtic word for land, a farm or estate ; and the inner island, nearest to the shore, has been used for pasturage for sheep. The Farnes are not a pleasant group of islands ; they are rather an archipelago in which sunken rocks and submerged shoals appear and disappear according to the tides which run unusually high at times. Another complication is the double tide. Another, the violence of the winds. Tide and wind together also bring into operation a complexity of currents of most treacherous nature and as the height of

<sup>1</sup> Centuries ago Reginald of Durham broke out into a lament over Bamburgh's fallen fortunes :

" The city, renowned formerly for the magnificent splendour of its high estate, has in these latter days been burdened with tribute, and reduced to the condition of a handmaiden. She who was once the mistress of the cities of Britain has exchanged the glories of her ancient sabbaths for shame and desolation. The crowds that flocked to her festivals are now represented by a few herdsmen. The pleasures her dignity afforded us, are now past and gone."



the islands and their shape and area are perpetually affected, the Farnes are for ever undergoing kaleidoscopic changes and are difficult to navigate unless by men who understand them.

The islands are an outcrop of the Great Whin Rock. No trees or shrubs grow on them, although on the Inner Farne, Brownsman and Staples the coarse grass that is also seen along the sand dunes of the shore is to be found and other herbage.

They are, roughly speaking, divided into two groups. Beyond the Fairway, a broad passage between the islands and the land, lie the Inner Farne,<sup>1</sup> the largest, and to the north-east Wide-opens (or Wedums). The Inner Farne is the island seen most plainly from the shore and with its white painted cottages, flagstaff and lighthouses looks a trim and domesticated habitation although the lights are now unwatched, and worked by mechanism, and the cottages are only tenanted by the bird watchers in the nesting season.

The Staples Sound separates this inland cluster from the further islands, first the Brownsman and then in a straight line out to sea, the Big and Little Harkers, with the North and South Wamses to the west, and the Bluecaps between the Harkers and the Longstone, which last is furthest out of all. The Knavestone rock with the submerged rocks on which are breakers, forms the outpost of the Longstone. The Crumstone, the great breeding place for seals, lies about a mile south of the Longstone, and is only visible after each high tide. Out here is by far the wildest part of this far-famed ocean territory.

St. Cuthbert left Lindisfarne or Holy Island for the greater solitude of the Inner Farne, where he built a cell with his own hands. He was a woman hater of the most virulent kind. He built a chapel for women at the extreme end of Lindisfarne so that they should not enter his church, and until the Reformation no woman was permitted to approach his shrine in Durham Cathedral, a cross of blue stone being let into the floor beyond which no woman might pass on pain of severest penalties. His horror of the female sex was so great that he forbade the keeping of cows on Lindisfarne because "where there is a cow there must be a woman and where there is a woman there must be mischief." And yet when the monks took up the remains of the Saint and brought them to the mainland, to wander up and down until they received his heavenly message to pause and erect a church, they were guided to the spot chosen by St. Cuthbert by a woman.

They had been told that Dunholme was the appointed spot, but could not find it. As they stopped discouraged, they heard a woman searching for her cow, cry out to another woman for news of it, and her companion answer it was in Dunholme.<sup>2</sup> There the monks brought the coffin of the Saint and raised above it a little church of wands and branches, which was replaced by a stone chapel, and then by the great white church, and finally by Durham Cathedral.

It is of some interest to recognize that a woman, Grace Darling,

<sup>1</sup> Sometimes called Fern Island, or the House Island.

<sup>2</sup> The origin of the old Inn-sign of the Dun-Cow.

brought wider fame to the Farnes than any monk had done ; also that the restoration of St. Cuthbert's chapel came about as a memorial to her, the first subscription to the project being sent by women—Queen Victoria and the Queen Dowager. A slab with an inscription about Grace's character and deed occupies the place of honour, decorated with, ironically enough, the emblem of a St. Cuthbert's cross.

One thing Grace shared with her monastic precursors, a passion for the loneliness and freedom of the islands. They bred independence and fortitude alien to her gentle self ; they developed out of a conventional religious training, a deep-lying solemnity seldom expressed but the foundation of her thoughts and actions.

Such land as gave her footing amidst the waste of waves, partook of the turbulent forces that for ever surged about it.

Although the abode of saints, the Farnes were also celebrated as the home of wild and warring influences. Black magic was associated with them, and St. Bartholomew, who made his home there after St. Cuthbert had departed, writes thus :

" Farne, once the stronghold of demons, is now the cloister and school of saints . . . instituted for the wholesome tending of body and mind. It always possesses men of virtue, nay it makes them such, for . . . he must either cultivate virtue or he must quit the path of virtue. There, exercise awaits all, idleness none. There is there the greatest waste of things which in union with the cold arising from the sea, adds to the force of temptation. From the east to the west it is begirt with rugged rocks and the boundless ocean, it labours under a constant struggle and invincible conflict with the waves. Here the demons are supposed to reside. The brethren . . . have seen them in a sudden, clad in cowls and riding upon goats, black in complexion, short in stature, their countenances most hideous, their heads long, the appearance of the whole troop most terrible. Like soldiers they brandished their hand lances which they darted after the fashion of war. At first the sign of the cross was sufficient to repel their attacks, but the only protection in the end was a circumvallation of straws signed with the cross, and fixed in the sand around which the devils galled for a while and then retired." Gallow is from the Anglo-Saxon gaelan, and means "to terrify ; to fright ; to scare." Anyone who knows those black rocks which stick out of the white sand on the little beaches of the islands, will readily picture those short black devils with their lances, gallowing round the watchers. By moonlight, the shadows are as inky as the rocks themselves ; through the spray of the breakers which always wash the shores, even in the calmest weather, the rocks seem to move.

There were other devils on that coast. Wreckers were, alas, well known. In Blakhal's *Brieffe Narration*, we find these words :

" He (the governor) told us how the common people there do pray for shippes which they see in danger. They al sit down upon their knees and hold up their handes and say very devotedly, ' Lord, send her to us ; God, send her to us.' You, said he, seeing them upon their

knees and their handes joyned, do think that they are praying for your sauvette, but their myndes are far from that."<sup>1</sup>

But Grace and Grace's family were light-keepers.

The origin of the lighthouses upon the Farnes is difficult to determine. Report has it that the monks kept lights burning. There is an old tower on the Inner Farne, erected in 1500 as a Border Pele Tower, against the depredations of the Scots and used as a fort in the days of Elizabeth. This bears the name of Prior Castells Tower, and seems to have been used later as a lighthouse.

James Raine, in his history of Durham, gives a licence granted by Charles II (1673) to Sir John Clayton, and George Blake, to "erect certain lighthouses upon the said coast, one whereof is to be on Fern Island." Charles writes to the Dean and Chapter of Durham, to whom the island belongs, asking them to renew the lease to Sir John Clayton, the present tenant, and recommending the Dean and Chapter to "reserve out of the same one acre of land for the erecting of a Lighthouse together with a highway to it, for such termes and rates as you, the Dean and Chapter, shall think reasonable."

Raine gives another lease "to Francis Liddle, the elder, of Ogle Castle, Northumberland, Esq., of Ferne Island etc., license, leave, and liberty to have, use and enjoy the Lighthouse now erected" and mentions carriage way for coals, and room to heap up coals, shewing the light was coal, not oil. But coal fires gave a very uncertain and variable light, scarcely showing at all to windward in stormy weather where it was most required, as vessels driven on a lee shore could scarcely see it until they were close upon it. Besides, not having any distinctive character, it was impossible for the mariner to say whether it might be a light from a lime kiln or a shore light; thus many vessels were wrecked through confounding one light with another and not discovering their error until it was too late.

In 1774, however, a tremendous storm resulting in a plethora of wrecks upon the Farnes, drove Trinity House to take action, and a lighthouse forty-three feet high was built upon the Inner Fern. William Darling in his *Journal* states that "two lighthouses were erected, an inner one upon the principal Farne Island, nearest to the mainland, and the other upon Staple Island, the most central of the larger rocks. This light was afterwards removed to an adjacent island a little more outward (the Brownsman)." The possibility of the first light being on the Staple Island is confirmed by the record in *The North Sea Pilot*, of the Staples "having a square building upon it, the remains of a former Lighthouse." Trinity has no record of this.

In 1809-1810, however, the tower on the Inner Farne Island was rebuilt, and Trinity states a third lighthouse was built on the Brownsman,

<sup>1</sup> In 1472 the magnificent barge of the Bishop of St. Andrews—the *St. Salvador*—laden with rich merchandize from Flanders, was wrecked on this coast, and the Bamburghers fell on the cargo and plundered it, and further, kept the Abbott of St. Colomb, who had escaped from the disaster, a prisoner, until a ransom of £80 Sterling was paid. Again in 1559 other Scottish vessels were similarly wrecked. *Comprehensive Guide to Northumberland*, W. W. Tomlinson.

oil was used instead of coal fires, and revolving lights, with reflectors and argand lamps, were established on the Inner Farne and the Brownsman. With the coming of Robert Darling, Grace's grandfather, as light-keeper in 1795, the Farnes had entered on to a new era. Where they had threatened, they were destined to become protectors of the mariner, and now the Farne Lights are a beacon to the coastal traffic.

The light-keeper's calling makes great demands on those who pursue it—trustworthiness, a high sense of responsibility, and an ability to meet every possible emergency. When Robert Darling and his son started, they had to face difficulties now unknown. Communication with the main was a serious problem. Wrecks demanded the courageous service of the light-keeper, from whom alone aid could be forthcoming to castaways on the adjacent rocks.

The needs bred a race of men inured to suffering and yet gentle-handed and compassionate—with the iron will of those who are constantly forced to make unaided decisions affecting life itself, and the taciturnity and quiet ways of those remote from humanity.

The Darlings developed an individuality and characteristics as pronounced as any of the great families in their part of the world. If one could always tell a Percy, one could also always tell a Darling, and one can do so, even now.

Robert Darling had died in the April of the year when Grace was born. He had been light-keeper at the Brownsman since 1795, coming there with his wife and youngest son William, Grace's father, then aged nine. Born on March 11th, 1746, Robert Darling emigrated from Dunse when Scottish agricultural conditions were very bad; he was the seventh child, the only boy, with six sisters, and when he grew to manhood, he crossed the Border and settled in Belford, a small parish consisting of about 140 families, and the next stage to Alnwick. Though inland, Belford lies towards the sea, whose shores it surveys for a considerable distance. Here he plied his trade as cooper, and on September 2nd, 1769, he married Elizabeth Clarke, sister to Mrs. William Brooks (a much respected resident), by whom he had seven children, five boys and two girls, three of whom died young. Robert Darling and his wife are buried at Belford. He was a brave man, and entries in William Darling's *Journal* testify to many lives saved by his father as well as much valuable cargo. A long line of his descendants have followed in Robert Darling's calling of light-keeper down to the fifth generation, all with fine records of trustworthiness and courage.

Mrs. Robert Darling died at the Brownsman Lighthouse on August 14th, 1813, so that Grace never knew her paternal grandfather or grandmother. Her elder brothers and sisters, William, Thomasin and Mary Ann, Job and Elizabeth Grace (Betsey), had been brought up with them, and the last and Robert (born on the Brownsman March 14th, 1814) were named after the Darling grandparents. William and Thomasin were christened after their parents; Job Horsley and Grace Horsley, after the Horsley grandparents; Elizabeth Grace combined the names of both grandmothers. Grandmother Grace Horsley died the year before Grace

was born, and Grace received the full name in compliment to her. Later, one of the twins, George Alexander, commemorated George Darling, his great-grandfather, and George and Alexander Horsley, his uncles, while William Brooks was named after his great-aunt's husband, Wm. Brooks of Belford. The continuity of the names shews the strong family feeling.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### GRACE DARLING'S BIRTHPLACE : BAMBURGH

It is just as well to realize the amenities prevailing in Bamburgh at the beginning of the nineteenth century, so that one does not get too gloomy a view of Grace Darling's childhood. Belford was the post town for the islands but Bamburgh was much nearer, right on the shore itself, and when Robert Darling became light-keeper at the Brownsman, Bamburgh was the town where William was brought up. William was a lively and masterful young man with a keen interest in books and study ; Mrs. Sisson, a daughter of one of the Crewe Trustees, who is alive to-day, remembers as a little girl, hearing old Darling talk of his smuggling adventures as a lad when he once swam ashore with a keg, the rope between his teeth.

When only nineteen, he married Thomasin Horsley, the eldest daughter of Job Horsley ; she was twelve years older than her young husband, but made him a most submissive and devoted wife.

Job Horsley and his wife Grace occupied the cottage opposite the churchyard and here Mrs. William Darling came to bear her children. She did not lose one of her nine babies. There was a resident midwife in Bamburgh, and an excellent doctor, Mr. Fender. Job himself lived on, a hale old man, till he was ninety-four, and his four other children, Alexander, Margaret (Mrs. Martin), Robert and George, also lived to a good old age, his grand-daughter, Mary Reed, living to be a centenarian. Grace came of a good sound stock on the Horsley side.

Now the Horsleys were once great people in Bamburgh. As far back as 1323 Roger de Horsley had been Constable of Bamburgh Castle. The Horsleys held abbey leases, manors and manor land ; there were three brothers, all landed people ; Long Horsley takes its name from one branch, then there is Horsley of Outchester and Horsley of Bamburgh. The name of Horsley is still proudly preserved in the Darling family and Grace was punctilious to sign her name Grace Horsley Darling. Her ancestors, however, had been forced to sell their estate at the beginning of the seventeenth century, in spite of a great effort to keep their lands, but like other old Bamburgh families, their descendants remained in the district, still on the land as farmers or labourers.

So to Bamburgh the lighthouse children came to visit their Horsley grandparents, a shy retiring little brood, gazing wide-eyed at the doings of their relations on the Main. There are people living who remembered tales of the oddness and quietness of the children from the Farnes,

Grace was a little thing, thoughtful beyond her years, and the pet of her elder brothers, William and Job, in their 'teens when Grace was still a very little girl. The eldest sisters, Thomasin and Mary Ann, were seven years older than Grace; Elizabeth Grace (Betsey) three years ahead, so that Robert and Grace were in charge of the older members of the family. Their mother was so much older than the children and so seldom came ashore except to bear her babies, that although she was dearly beloved and respected by her family, the elder ones tended to take her place in looking after the younger brothers and sisters.

Grace, as the youngest, was the family pet until some years after the twins arrived. By this time the elder children were leaving home and Grace became the Little Mother in her turn.

Grace Darling's biographers are fond of describing the Longstone as a desert island, akin to Robinson Crusoe's; whereas it was only an hour's row in fine weather from the Main, and fishing boats were constantly plying between the islands and Bamburgh and Seahouses.

Grace in her neat serviceable frock with its white pinafore often visited Grandfather Horsley's cottage. Those deep dark eyes of hers were quick to see everything about her and relate her impressions to, and test them by, her home life on the Farnes. The children led so sheltered an existence under the abiding influence of their good, hard-working parents, that Bamburgh seemed to little Grace a rather shocking metropolis. One thing that amazed her was the way dwellers on the Main talked of "getting their work done," and then sitting down to amuse themselves with cards or story books, gossip and merry-makings. Work on the Longstone continued through the twenty-four hours, for the tending of the lights was the chief and all-important business, then every hour of daylight abounded with interest and adventure as the children learned to do things and to help their parents. Solemn-eyed little Grace blushed, smiled, ran and frolicked with the Horsley cousins; watched the busy shipping life of the little seaport; and was made much of by the skippers and sailors who frequented Bamburgh, but secretly, she felt bewildered by the general bustle and uproarious friendliness. Bamburgh in those days was very much a port of call. To-day the sands are deserted except for a brief season when the summer visitors appear; but at the beginning of the nineteenth century, Warenquay, just beyond Budle, was a harbour accommodating a multitude of minor shipping. Eleanor Carr, one of Grace's childhood friends (the late Mrs. Ross of Friars Farm), told of her honeymoon ninety years ago, which she and her husband spent in seeing the sights of Waren Bay. All the little ships displayed every piece of bunting they possessed, to the delight of the young couple, who were further pleased to find this gay display was in their honour. A granary stood on the quay where corn was brought from the Continent, and transferred into flat-bottomed lighters which went up the river at high tide, to Waren Mill. Out-going vessels carried the flour away and there was perpetual traffic up and down the coast. "Jenny Henderson's," an Inn between Budle and Waren Mill, was the great meeting-place of local skippers and sailors.

There were many famous Bamburgh men : Captain Winchester, to whom we owe the erection of the raised cages across the treacherous sands to Holy Islands where travellers caught by the tide may shelter, and whose name will always be remembered for his benevolence to the Japanese crew he rescued and finally conducted to their home after carrying them about for two years (at his expense) on the high seas. Then there was the great family of Younghusbands, whose memorial tablets line the church, gallant seamen with great records of their courage and their kindness.

Bamburgh had the honour of being the first life-saving station in England, for in 1786 Archdeacon Sharp, the famous Crewe Trustee, sent a Bamburgh fishing coble to Lionel Lukin, a coach-builder in Long Acre, who was making experiments in life-saving vessels, and it was returned with Lukin's improvements—a projecting cork gunwale and airtight cases at ends of boat and alongside—and used for many years.

Amongst the busy doings of the little port with its constant traffic with the Continent, the light-keeper's little daughter might well find life a trifle too boisterous. Most of all, at the great feastings in September when all the neighbourhood, and people further afield than that, trooped in.

St. Aidan's Feast<sup>1</sup> was a time of merrymaking for children and adults alike. To the Feastings came the Belford cousins, and the Horsley cousins, and the children from the Brownsman. The village green was lined with stalls that offered delicacies only seen at fair-time. Gingerbread in quaint devices, nuts and oranges, claggum, and special sweetmeats. There were also early apples and late gooseberries, both associated with the Feastings. Then hardware and cutlery from Kelso, hats, caps and sickles from Rothbury, boots and shoes from Alnwick, competed with the crockery of the muggers, and the tar, sold in barrels, for the shepherds who came down from the Cheviots. Most entertaining of all were the sports, the ninepines, the roley-poley, the wheel of fortune. Quoits was the great game, football being unknown as late as sixty years ago. But there was dancing in tents and on the green, and fiddling and players. Everybody kept open house all day long for relatives, friends and acquaintances and much fun and mild flirtation took place. The Darlings could be sure of meeting all their friends and relatives.

Here the little Darlings met the children of the well-to-do farmers of the coast. The farmers occupied a very good position, those of Northumberland being famed for the superior education of their children, and Grace formed warm childish friendships with the Thompsons, the Carrs, the Matthewsons, the Crawfords, the Blacketts, which stayed through her girlhood but could never develop to great intimacy

<sup>1</sup> In early times dedications were held annually on the Saint's day to whom the church was dedicated and then followed the village feast ; and country people, taking advantage of meeting each other, fell into the custom of taking their goods for barter. In course of time the lord of the manor obtained a charter from the King to hold the fair and levy tolls.

on account of her distant home and lack of opportunity of participating in the youthful frivolities her friends enjoyed.

But she was essentially amiable, and responded naturally to the affection shewn to her. There was nothing dour or morbid about the quiet little girl, and when the Horsley cousins came over to the Brownsman, their descendants still tell of the fun they had with Grace as leader, her dog Happy beside her, racing over the rough grass, rabbiting with the boys, carrying the babies pickaback, fearless and joyful when she had her cousins with her on familiar ground. Best of all they enjoyed going out in the coble with little Grace, already used to lending a hand with net or line.

Job Horsley was a farmer in that he possessed fields and farmed in a small way. When Grace was born he was gardener to Bamburgh Castle, then in possession of the Crewe Trustees, and his cottage neighboured the great walled garden. There can yet be seen the pear tree planted in 1663 by the Dorothy Forster who married the famous Bishop of Durham, Lord Crewe ; it stands by the wall beside the door upon the Grove whose trees look in over the red brick coping, and it still bears fruit.

One of the chief delights of Bamburgh to Grace was her grandfather's garden.

Those were the days of luscious wall fruit, of sunbrowned pears and rosy nectarines, golden apricots and downy peaches, fruit impossible to grow upon the Brownsman. Inside those high walls Grace stepped into a sheltered world, fecund and mellow, where her grandfather was sovereign just as her father was ruler of the Brownsman. Here little Grace gained the love and knowledge that made her in later years a useful helper in the bleak, though walled gardens on the island. And here, she continued the unconscious absorbing of the dignity of her belongings. Her father supreme on that sea-girt territory of his very own : her grandfather supreme in this guarded place of beauty, fertility and richness. Patiently and eagerly little Grace learned to dibble earth, set seeds, catch slugs and earwigs. Gratefully she enjoyed the fruit so different from the homely fare at home. For the table of the Crewe Trustees must be furnished with all the delicacies of the season, the Infirmary under their care, must be supplied with grapes for invalids and roots and herbs for broth, and the boarders and the governesses and masters needed a great plenty of substantial vegetables.

From the very beginning Grace's life was closely intertwined with Bamburgh Castle and the Crewe Trustees. Grandfather Horsley occupied the cottage of Mr. Boulton, his predecessor as castle gardener. Mr. Boulton's son, Andrew, had got his schooling at the castle, where Archdeacon Sharp resided with his family. The Sharps took a great interest in Andrew Boulton and made it possible for him to go to college and be ordained. On the death of the famous Archdeacon Sharp, Andrew was nominated Perpetual Curate of Bamburgh in the Archdeacon's place. Andrew Boulton baptized Grace with other of her brothers and sisters. Later on, he married Miss Catherine Sharp, the Arch-



deacon's grand-daughter, and took the name of Sharp, which gave rise to a famous local joke, that he went bolt (Boult) into the church and came out sharp.

The Horsleys had descended, the Boult's had risen, in estate. But the old families of Bamburgh, whether high or low in their present position, were on the most friendly of footings. Education was common to all. They had great respect for rank and birth, especially Bamburgh birth, because so many of them, rich or poor, could look back to notable ancestors. Habits were simple in those days and money was not of the consequence in social relationships that it is now.

So there was Grandfather Job, gardener to the Castle ; little Robert, only a year older than Grace, getting his schooling at the Castle ; and the light-keepers, Robert and William Darling, well known at the Castle through their position, for was not one of the chief activities of the Castle, the life-saving and assistance to shipwrecked mariners ? Who would be in more constant communication with the Crewe Trustees than the light-keepers who went out to so many wrecks and sent the sailors they rescued to the Castle Infirmary, or, when bereft of their chests and all their possessions, to receive help from the Crewe Trustees ?

But who were the Crewe Trustees ?

## CHAPTER FIVE

### TWO CASTLES

LOOK up at Bamburgh Castle with its massive Keep, its long line of granaries and stables, the King's House, the Captain's Lodgings and the lodgings of the Crewe Trustees. Stand beneath the walls on the landward side, or upon the sands, where the castle rises sheer above the dunes. One is oppressed by its remoteness and impregnability, so far up, so unapproachable, with the tiny windows that hardly show within the bareness of the massive stones. And then look back at the tiny cottages in the main street whose roof is below the level of the castle cellars, and whose whole area is less than the castle keep. In one of those, Grace Darling died. How utterly apart and unrelated seem the dwellers in such places. And yet the influence of Bamburgh Castle penetrated Grace's life from the beginning to the end ; with that of an even more imposing pile, the home of the Dukes of Northumberland, Alnwick Castle. When the fury of adulation burst upon her the castles of Bamburgh and Alnwick were her cities of refuge.

The strange parallelism of their respective histories is of interest. Bamburgh and Alnwick were the chief English strongholds of the north during the Border Wars, but by the time Elizabeth came to the throne both castles were in ruins. Bamburgh passed from the Crown to the Forster family in 1610. Dorothy Forster, daughter of Sir William Forster, married Lord Crewe, Bishop of Durham, and to him the castle was sold. On his death, he left the Castle and its extensive estates in

the hands of Trustees for the purposes of charity, and the castle became a landmark in the educational history of the county ; and though their charitable ministrations were mainly ecclesiastical, the Crewe Trustees were also pioneers in the movement for alleviation of the hardships of sailors. The most famous of the Crewe Trustees was Archdeacon Sharp. In 1738 he rebuilt the castle at his own expense and resided there until his death in 1792. He rebuilt the ruined great hall, making a school where thirty poor girls were admitted, from nine years old until they were sixteen. They were found in board, washing and lodging and a uniform of green or brown with neat white collars ; taught writing, arithmetic, knitting, sewing, spinning, and sent out to service, provided with good clothing and a sum of money. Schools in the castle, in the Archdeacon's time, were opened also to other boys and girls, unlimited in number, and taught gratis, and supplied with books, etc., free of expense. As many as a hundred and eighty attended, coming from the surrounding districts. Later (in 1877) the Crewe Trustees built schools outside the castle walls for these.

Grace did not go to the school but her brothers did ; and Grace's father benefited thereby. Navigators, sea captains, doctors, lawyers, schoolmasters, merchants and farmers received their first training in those schools so carefully guided and so valued by the Crewe Trustees. In later years when the world discovered the light-keeper's daughter, people marvelled at her refinement and her culture ; she loved books, possessed them, read and thought as few young women did in those days. But there were opportunities for reading in that remote village such as few cities could offer then.

William Darling had grown up with a great free library at his service ; he had learned to love books, read and own them, and Grace, who was his close companion, shared his taste in this.

At the castle was a remarkable public library, containing about 14,000 works, of all branches of literature, theology, history, law, the classics and all recognized books of worth in the early nineteenth century. This included the library of Dr. John Sharp, Archbishop of York, from whom it descended to his son, Dr. Thomas Sharp, Prebendary of Durham, and from him to Dr. John Sharp, the Crewe Trustee. The last bequeathed it to the Bamburgh Castle Library, together with all his own books. The Crewe Trustees also bought Dr. Thomas Sharp's library in 1778. The library was opened every Saturday morning between ten and one, and books lent freely to all reputable house-keepers residing within twenty miles of Bamburgh.

There was an infirmary, with from thirty to forty in-patients, and with over a thousand out-patients yearly. A meal market and grocer's shop was opened every Tuesday and Friday for the benefit of the industrious poor ; the meal was sold at reduced rates and the groceries at prime cost. This charity was not confined to any distance of place, and as many as thirteen hundred people yearly availed themselves of what was known as "the free shop." In years of distress far more came to it.

Of most interest to the Darlings, however, were the activities on behalf

of the mariners and fishermen, due to the initiative of Archdeacon Sharp. In a letter, he explains how this form of charity came about.

*"The vicinity of the Farne Islands and the want of regular soundings without them, pointed out the convenience of regular firing in a fog ; and an old gun found in the sand, was applied to that purpose, which has answered our most sanguine expectations. . . . The number of wrecks on this particular coast, of vessels that had run for Holy Island harbour in a storm and failed of getting into it, and the melancholy sights from the castle of persons wrecked on the islands and starving with cold and hunger, together with the savage plundering of such goods, etc., as were driven on shore, induced the lords of the manor to give every assistance to vessels in distress, and premiums for saving of lives. Once a vessel was wrecked behind the castle and the crew saved ; but the unfortunate Master, having escaped the perils of the sea, died of a damp bed in the village. That the like might never happen again, all shipwrecked sailors who come, are received here and supplied with every necessity. This was the beginning of our little infirmary. . . ."*

Bamburgh Castle had been for long a landmark for mariners ; during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries it was a beacon of refuge and assistance in every possible way to all who worked on land or sea. The gentle influence of St. Aidan and the spiritual exaltation of St. Cuthbert had triumphed indeed over the cruel tyranny of Pagan times ; the famous Dr. Sharp himself ministered at St. Aidan's Church, and the little church of "wands and branches" where St. Cuthbert's coffin rested . . . now Durham Cathedral . . . supplied most of the Crewe Trustees.

Because of the benign influence of the castle, Bamburgh was one of the most protected places in England. Through those dark days during and after the Napoleonic wars when there were bloody riots and the power looms destroyed, general distress, paralysis of trade, rebellion, strikes, Bamburgh was a contented little haven. In 1811, the population numbered 298, in 1821, 342, in 1831, 417. There was no distress and no rebellion. The Crewe Trustees were consulted on every possible question : part of the castle was maintained as their lodgings and here the Trustees came by turn, with their families, to supervise the welfare of their tenants and the village : to see that the cottagers were comfortable ; to build them wash-houses ; to start the boarders and the school-children in the world. In times of very great distress, the whole countryside was allowed to flock in to receive the benefits, so that Bamburgh folk were neither uppish nor envied, and so well did the Crewe Trustees perform their office, that there seems to have been no feeling of tyranny. When the boarders went out to service, their careers were watched and yearly prizes on an ascending scale, given for good conduct. When anyone showed signs of a desire to improve himself, the library was there, and the schoolmaster could always get the ear of the Trustees. They were there to serve Bamburgh, and they served it well, these benign Church dignitaries whose children enjoyed the Castle visits so much with all the marine delights of Bamburgh sands.

They brought into the little village an air of the great world, and the



BAMBURGH CASTLE

*Photo: H. W. Gibb*



people of Bamburgh were used to friendly yet respectful contact with these well-mannered divines. Manners were expected; the proper manners to one's betters. Everyone grew up with the custom of good manners engrained in them; just the right sort of manners to those who were learned and holy and yet whose business was the practical doings of life; of Bamburgh life. One can hardly picture how intensely localized, that life. How self-sufficient, how snug, how isolated from the world. Human nature with its frailties existed in Bamburgh as elsewhere, but the world's temptations didn't. There was a great contentment and probably the custom of good manners helped towards it. The outmoded qualities of respect and reverence, applied to home and school and church, at least make for pleasantness and ways of peace; and as there was no oppression and universal charity to sailors of all nationalities and faiths, the people of Bamburgh had a general sense of tolerance which served as a safety valve. One remained free-born in comfortable leading-strings.

When the news of her brave deed brought the reporters trooping to the lighthouse, they wondered at her modesty and gentleness which had no trace of rustic awkwardness: but what a training Grace had had in manners to her betters! From a tiny child, she had been accustomed to look up to her superiors: respect them and trust them and be grateful for their notice without that servility whose basic root is fear.

This delightful attitude to those who flocked to praise her, charmed everyone; experts in manners found in Grace's sincere acceptance of her betters' claims, her appreciation of their notice, her gratitude, a perfection which touched, and drew them to her. She had the charm of a wild bird which comes nestling, at one's call. Those benevolent and wise old Archdeacons who loved Bamburgh so well, builded better than they knew. Of course they were narrow, and Bamburgh, as events were tragically to prove, was an overheated nest from which a delicate fledgling might be plucked and thrown into a driving wind with sad results. But when the world found Grace, her manners were perfect, and her charm remains in memory, even now.

At the time, even to people used to the sycophancy of tenants and dependants, Grace made an impression hard to realize. She was to become the ewe-lamb of Alnwick Castle!

Bamburgh Castle was the very heart of Bamburgh; but the great shadow of Alnwick stretched to that part of the world; remote and yet on Bamburgh's horizon, and so part of Bamburgh.

Alnwick Castle, the stronghold of the Percies since 1309 and since 1766 the seat of the Dukes of Northumberland, stands a little inland seventeen miles south of Bamburgh. The line of Percies in our history books, who provided Hotspur and many risings and gallantry beloved of every school child, were the Earls of Northumberland. In 1766, three years before Robert Darling married Elizabeth Clarke, and about the year in which he came to Belford, Sir Hugh Smithson was created the First Duke. Little did anyone think the Darling family was to be linked in history with the great house of Northumberland. The 2nd, 3rd and 4th

Dukes of Northumberland were, however, to be so associated with Grace's family that a brief note about the great change in the Percy history, and indeed the history of the country, is essential. With the coming of the Dukes, came an entirely new influence in the North.

The only daughter of the last Earl of Northumberland, Elizabeth, Baroness Percy, inherited the Percy estates, including the castle, by that time in ruins. She married the Third Duke of Somerset and the Percy estates passed to the Somerset family. The name of Percy seemed extinct. But the Third Duke of Somerset and his wife, Elizabeth Percy, had a son, Lord Hertford; his only son and heir Lord Beauchamp died at an early age at Bologna, and there being no male heir, Lord Beauchamp's sister Elizabeth, "Lady Betty," succeeded to the Percy estates.

Before there was any prospect of her succession Lady Betty had made a love-match with Sir Hugh Smithson, known as the handsomest man of his time. On the death of her brother, Lady Betty's husband took the name of Percy, succeeded to the Earldom of Northumberland in 1750, and in 1766, on account of his great territorial influence and his political services to George the Third, was made the First Duke of Northumberland. He restored Alnwick and once more the Percies reigned there.

Sir Hugh Smithson was every inch a Yorkshireman. Portraits exist shewing a countenance fair and open, with the acquisitive pointed nose, firm lips and determined chin of the prosperous administrator. There is something very pleasant in his expression, a fair and florid kindness coupled with great sagacity and shrewdness; emphatically a man of action and one who was not afraid of new ideas.

His wife Elizabeth, Baroness Percy and the first Duchess of Northumberland, was devoted to the traditions of her family and a "Percy" in everything, including her love of splendour. The house of Northumberland now took on new lustre. The First Duke and Duchess appeared to have lived very happily together, always did everything together on their estates, held high places at Court, and from all records, seem to have been extremely united.

The Duchess's eldest son (later the Second Duke Hugh) gained renown all over Europe as a military genius. His *Pocketbook of Military Notes* (1760-1761), written when he was eighteen, was a standard book of reference and many writers refer to it. The Second Duke Hugh succeeded to the title in 1786. He was a model landlord, and at the time of the Peace, when there was great distress, he reduced his rents twenty-five per cent., and a Memorial erected by his grateful tenants, stands in Alnwick.<sup>1</sup> At the height of his fame Walpole wrote of him: "Totally devoid of ostentation; most simple and retiring."

<sup>1</sup> In those days of distress caused by the failure of the wheat crop at a time when the importation of foreign bread-stuffs was either prohibited or very heavily taxed the Duke of Northumberland wrote to his House-Steward at Syon:

"To Henderson.

17th July, 1795.

"In consequence of the present scarcity of wheat . . . you will give the most positive directions to the Butler, that neither rolls, nor any other sort of wheaten bread finer than that which . . . is called by the name of Standard Wheaten

The Second Duke took a great interest in the coast and ordered the second lifeboat that was ever made (Greathead's model), He presented this to Shields with an endowment for its upkeep, and later presented a lifeboat to Oporto, Portugal.

But his main interest was the Army and he is rightly called the Soldier Duke. He was sent overseas in the American War of Independence, but his sympathies were on the American side and although he considered his first duty was to his King and he must obey orders as a soldier, yet his heart was never in the campaign in spite of his brilliant achievements there.

He loved and was beloved by all his men ; he abolished corporal punishments ; sent home all the wives of his men who died in battle, with pensions ; and in every way shared the privations of the field. He actually marched on foot with his regiment, a proceeding which delighted his spirited mother the First Duchess.

After some years his dislike of the methods of the British Generals was so profound that he asked for and obtained his recall, and departed mourned by English and Americans alike. His portrait still hangs in the Town Hall, Boston.

It is curious that his half-brother, Alexander Smithson, the illegitimate son of the First Duke, was equally attached to America. Their Smithson grandmother was named Philadelphia, and they must have been brought up with a love of justice and freedom akin to that which actuated the British settlers overseas.

Now William Darling knew the Second Duke and joined the troop of yeomanry the Soldier Duke raised at the time of the threatened Napoleonic invasion ; Alexander Horsley had come with a recruiting party to Alnwick, and William Darling used to go over to the Castle ward to drill. Artists later on detected an extraordinary likeness in Grace to Napoleon. Her father was full of that gentleman's affairs when Grace was conceived.

The Second Duke died when Grace was three years old, and during her childhood, the Third Duke reigned. She knew of Alnwick Castle as a great place, very far away, of such surpassing splendour that one could not visualize it or even think of it as being in one's ken. A party of the Duke's servants once visited Bamburgh, and came off to the lighthouse in William Darling's coble, he being ashore at Bamburgh and able to conduct them. Their visit created in the light-keeper's children the profoundest awe.

Far, far away, in the uttermost altitudes of Grace's childish comprehensions, Alnwick Castle and the Duke and Duchess towered. Compared to Alnwick, Bamburgh Castle and the Crewe Trustees were homely and near.

Bread, be after this day brought into my family . . . also that the Clerk of the Kitchen be desired to make no puddings, Pies, Tarts, or Cakes in which flour is used ; and that my own dinner for the future is to consist of one course unless orders are given to the contrary ; and no hot joints, and only one kind of cold meat to be at my side table." Alnwick MSS.



## CHAPTER SIX

## LIFE ON THE BROWNSMAN

GRACE was baptized in Bamburgh Church by the Rev. Andrew Boulton on December 17th, 1815, and probably her father went over for the christening and brought his wife and child back to the lighthouse for Christmas.

His *Journal* gives an indication of his life. The day after Grace's birth, he enters :

"1815: Nov. 25: Mr. James Blackett myself and T. Fender caught four old seals in waterhole, middle of Northernhairs."

And three days after her baptism :

"1815: Dec. 20: I killed one old cow seal with her young at low water, E. Point Staple Island."

Mr. Fender was the Bamburgh doctor who had probably come off with Mr. Blackett, to bring the news of Grace's birth.

Mr. Blackett married a Miss Anderson, and was connected with the Glovers, and Mathewsons, all friends of the Darlings. Blackett is another of the old Bamburgh families, which in bygone years contributed no less than three High Sheriffs to the county.

So here is Grace upon the Brownsman. What was it like, this island on which Grace spent the first ten years of her life?

The Brownsman almost joins Staple Island. On the south side of the Staple is a bold cliff with some detached rocks, called the Pinnacles. On the north side of the Brownsman stood the lighthouse. William Howitt, in a book of travels published in 1841, thus describes the Brownsman :

"As we approached the second island (i.e. after Staple Island), . . . there is a row of square insulated rocks rising out of the sea near the island cliffs, called The Pinnacles, the tops of which were covered by sea fowl. It was one of the most curious and beautiful sights that I ever saw. They were chiefly guillemots and puffins. They seemed all to be sitting erect as close as they could crowd and waving their little dark wings as if for joy. There was a sort of stratum of milk white on top of the rocks and a stratum of dark brown of their breasts and heads, their beaks all pointing upwards, and their little wings as I have said all in a flutter. On the sides of the cliffs, on little projections, sat gulls, looking very white and silvery against the dark arch.

"We landed on this island and went across it. It was like the rest of these desolate isles, all of dark whinstone, cracked in all directions, and worn with the action of winds, waves and tempests since the world began.

"Over the greater part of it was not a blade of grass nor a grain of earth; it was bare and iron-like stone crusted all round the coast, as far as high-water mark, with limpet and still smaller shells. We

ascended wrinkled hills of blackstone, and descended into worn and dismal dells of the same ; into some of which where the tide got entrance, it came pouring and roaring in raging whiteness, and churning the loose fragments of whinstone into round pebbles, and piling them up in deep crevices with seaweeds like great round ropes, and heaps of fungus. Over our heads screamed hundreds of hovering birds, the laughing gull mingling its hideous laughter most wildly.

" We found numbers of nests among the loose stones and when we came to a part of the island where some grass grew, we found also numbers there as well as thousands of rabbits. Levying tribute of one from each nest, I soon collected a glorious sample of the eggs of the island for my boys at home ; some of them as large as my fist—those of eiderducks, puffins, razor-bills, terns, gulls, cormorants, etc.—many of them very beautiful. Some of them were very finely tapered, coloured and blotched with dark spots ; others white, others of an olive colour. These eggs are collected in thousands from May till the first of July, and sold, many being sent to London. They are used to make puddings, while the eggs of the gull are boiled and eaten cold to breakfast, and are, in that state, considered by many wealthy families quite a luxury. One of them contains as much as three or four hens' eggs. I ate of them, and thought them tolerably good ; but warm, they are said to have rather a strong taste, or what the common people call a fang. In pursuit of these eggs, the fowlers pass from crag to crag over the roaring sea, and even from one to the other of these perpendicular isolated rocks—the Pinnacles, by means of a narrow board placed from one to the other, and forming a narrow bridge over such horrid gaps, that the very sight of it strikes one with terror. After the first of July the birds are left to sit and rear their young in peace."

The loneliness of the Farnes can be best understood by remembering they are still one of the chief nesting places of sea-birds round our coast. Here for centuries, the migrating clouds come yearly to breed, and during May and June the islands are literally covered with sea-fowl of every kind. Grace was brought up with the sea-birds as her companions ; she had a passionate love of them, studied their habits, and found in them one of her greatest interests. Her collection of eggs is preserved at The Wyndings where her father spent the last years of his life. Imagine a child who knows absolutely nothing of the hedge-birds or the birds of woods and trees, but who is used to handling and petting the eider-duck, the cormorant, the puffin and the tern, who has moved amongst them since she was a baby when the sea-birds disputed so much as a right of way across the rocks they knew as home. One begins to understand her acquaintance with the sea in all its moods, her fearlessness of the rocks which appear so formidable to the visitor who looks up at them from the disturbed waters round them.

The bold cliffs to the southward of the Staples, the broken pillars of

the Pinnacles, the jagged reefs round which the waves for ever hurl themselves and stream in foaming onslaught, had no more terror for Grace than they had for the seamews.

Years after, when Grace was famous, a correspondent wrote to the *Liverpool Courier* (December 1838) an account of a picnic dinner at the Brownsman to which a party had rowed out on an excursion :

" The daughter (Grace) was then about five years old, and I remember her as one of the sweetest children I ever saw . . . she was brought up with the strictest feeling of humanity towards inferior animals. The island on which she dwells is the peculiar resort of the tern, and at the time I mention it was absolutely strewn with the unfledged young of that bird ; so much as to render it difficult to step out of an imperfectly marked footpath without treading on some of them.

" An eider duck, the shyest of all wild birds, had made her nest on the ground very near the lighthouse ; the little girl took it under her own peculiar charge, and the bird became so accustomed to her as to allow her to approach close to the nest without shewing the least alarm. Strangers in her company might approach within three or four yards but without the protection of her sweet countenance and the shelter of her mild clear eye, no one could approach within five times the distance before the bird flew away. . . . I have not a shadow of doubt that the nine persons so happily rescued, owe their lives to Grace Darling's *humane education*. . . ."

But there was no sentimentality in Grace's upbringing. She was one of a little community whose larder depended in no small part on their own exertions. The light-keeper and his sons were allowed to use their guns, and in the winter when communication with the land was difficult and fresh meat hard to come by, wild duck, teal, and widgeon were an acceptable contribution to the plentiful fare nine growing children needed. Year by year, William Darling recorded what had fallen to his gun that season : " This winter I got 48 mallards (wild duck), 10 Blue Nebs (widgeon), and 39 teal," and again " 31 mallards, 28 Blue Nebs, 16 teal." From 60 to 100 birds a season. Poultry was difficult to rear or keep on land for ever subject to winds of hurricane force, but the sea-birds provided all the eggs the Darlings needed. Then the down from the eider-ducks was collected for eider-downs, and feathers for pillows and bedding. Mrs. Darling's eiderdowns were famous, and a favourite gift to friends on land who sent books and precious groceries to the lighthouse.

Fish was cured for winter and enjoyed in season and the light-keeper and his children caught them from the rocks or in the little coble which they rowed about amongst the islands. They were not only eaten fresh from the water, but were sometimes so abundant they were sold at Seahouses.

" 1814 : Codlings very plentiful all winter and a few summer. Caught four score at Longstone south point New Year's Day."

"1817 : The haddocks numerous this season, 15 score being caught upon one line, or 60 score to the four-manned boat in Faren grounds," the *Journal* runs.

Thomasin taught her girls to cook, and visitors who came to see the lighthouse on expeditions from the main, were always welcomed hospitably and spoke warmly of the appetising if homely fare. As a farmer's daughter Thomasin was used to wheaten flour, and there would be the famous Northumbrian girdle-cakes, or "singing hinnies," as well as the homelier meal. The barley and pease flour in common use consisted of two parts barley mixed with one of grey pease, or beans before grinding. After being ground, the meal was sifted through a wooden sieve to take out the rough husks and bran. It was then kneaded with water, made into thin unleavened cakes, and immediately baked upon a girdle. Oatmeal formed a principal article of diet, not as bread but in crowdies and hasty pudding, or meal-kail. On pot days, of which Sunday was always one, flesh, broth, dumplings and a profusion of vegetables, made up a family feast, and tea and coffee were greatly enjoyed.

It must be remembered that the meals of those days needed a good deal more thought and attention than now ; when a large family has to be catered for direct from the soil, the sea, and the air, without the help of butcher, or fishmonger, or greengrocer, much more time is needed for preparation, so that the Darlings always led a busy life. There was no time for loneliness. This sort of upbringing does not encourage introspection. Throughout their lives, the Darlings were devoted to their parents and each other, and though Grace and her sisters and brothers were kept busy they never regarded their parents as hard taskmasters. But the word "throng," a local expression for "much occupied," was in common use. "We are very throng with spring cleaning," "We are very throng with George's shirts," wrote Grace in later years.

The girls in those days had to spin and weave the stuff for the family's clothing.

Grace's frocks can be seen still at The Wyndings, of simple cotton and coarse linens but exquisitely finished. Her eldest sister Thomasin and Grace were the two great needlewomen of the family. Thomasin became a dressmaker : Grace devoted her needle to the family. Perhaps this common love of sewing helped to bring the big sister and the little one together, in that devoted association which continued until the end ; Thomasin, with an inclination to a hare-lip, dark-haired and wiry, somewhat sharp of tongue, who was one of the first to leave home and set up for herself in Bamburgh, with her little sister five years old when Thomasin was twelve : amiable, gentle little Grace would answer Thomasin's shrewd tongue with disarming mildness. Grace loved people who could do things well, and Thomasin was one of them. Grace was so happily obedient it never occurred to her to resent orders, and Grace loved the calm regularity of sitting with her sister, sewing and singing and learning the old Border ballads.

Betsey, the between sister, was only two years younger than Thomasin,

but there was sufficient difference between Thomasin and Grace to make Grace dependent on Thomasin's superior wisdom and capacity, and Thomasin's loving and obedient "little sister" Grace remained through all her fame.

But though Grace was thoroughly domesticated, from babyhood she was brought up to vigorous outdoor life; she had other things to do! The heroic fibre of her father was never more expressed than in his resolution to have gardens on the Brownsman. There were more than one, to circumvent the attacks of wind and sea from different quarters.

The Brownsman and the Inner Farne differ from the other islands inasmuch as they are covered with a certain amount of very fertile soil, made up largely of bird droppings from the sea-birds which frequent them. Not only is there pasture for sheep and goats, but William Darling made walled gardens which gave a plentiful supply of vegetables during his whole residence on the Farnes, and here Grace worked with her father and her brothers. Gardening under the best conditions is a test of patience, but gardening on the Farnes required fortitude beyond that exacted from gardeners on the main. It must have been a wonderful discipline to sow and tend the seeds and watch the young plants all come up, and then behold a stupendous wind and sea come along. William Darling's *Journal* gives a picture of the difficulties.

"Two tremendous gales, viz., April 1st, west with snow showers; and on the 26th and 27th E. by N., severe with showers of sleet. The garden small seeds being all above ground were totally blown off or destroyed."

"Hurricane W.N.W. destroyed Brownsman gardens."

Apparently the Darlings set to work promptly for a few years after William Darling again records:

"A severe gale W. by N. from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. destroyed nearly three-quarters of the Brownsman garden."

The very next year a June hurricane is reported as "almost totally destroying our gardens."

And only three months after:

"A severe gale and high tide broke down part of the lower wall of the north garden Brownsman and overflowed the soil."

Their carrots were

"blasted and destroyed by five days' continued gales."

There was a plague of earwigs.

"I caught frequently one quart in the evening by placing cabbage leaves on the ground and laying a little barley meal in the middle and emptying them among hot water"

writes William Darling, pressed out of his usual reticence, to exact details.

But their potatoes thrived.

In 1852 William Darling chronicles:

"One half our potatoes diseased this year, being the first we have lost worth mentioning."

Confined they might be to the Brownsman most of the time, or rather, to the islands (for expeditions amongst the neighbouring islands were

of almost daily occurrence); but what exciting events took place. When hurricanes raged there were always consequences to marvel at and talk about. Things really *happened*. A hurricane for three hours, one October, blew the iron funnel from the top of the lantern into the sea eastward, for a distance of between two hundred and three hundred yards! Then, the year Grace was born, Mr. James Blackett erected a beacon in the narrow crevice on the south part of the Knavestone. It was merely an oak tree lopped, with eight iron stays, and six months after, the tree, or wood beacon, washed down by the sea, broke away close by the rock.

In 1818: "The cast iron beacon erected by Mr. Mutton, engineer, on the Knavestone, was begun June 18th, and finished July 23rd." But in 1819, when Grace was three years old,

"The Knavestone Beacon erected by Mr. Mutton is washed down by the heaviest N.E. sea ever remembered here. Stood fifteen months. This beacon, three legs cast iron the top being composition copper, weighed one ton."

There was always a risk of the high tides invading the island and sweeping over the yard and entering the kitchen. Life on the Brownsman must have been as thrilling as life on a sand castle. Think of conditions in Mrs. Darling's kitchen and the excitement of the children, not alluded to in this brief account of the

"Tremendous gale E. by S. The sea passed between the old square tower and dwelling house, entering the kitchen."

But living so far out at sea brought occasional great moments; moments of splendour and nearness to the world's great people. Close glimpses too of the new style vessels that were invading the shipping world. When Grace was seven years old, the first Royal procession passed the Farnes. On August 13th, 1822, at daylight, King George the Fourth sailed by in the Royal yacht, attended by two steamers. His Majesty had embarked at Greenwich on the 10th, and landed at Leith the day after he passed the Farnes.

It would be difficult to say which caused the greater sensation; the King or the steamers. It is the first time steamers are mentioned in Mr. Darling's *Journal* and quite possibly, the first time they passed the Farnes.

Loyalty to their Sovereign was as fixed in their lives as loyalty to their Church; but a greater, or at least a more special loyalty was the Darling's loyalty to Trinity. Not only did Trinity do everything conceivable for their comfort, safety, and well-being, but Trinity had entrusted to William Darling this domain where he and his family stood faithful guard over the high seas, and that was the purpose of their existence.

The Elder Brethren were the guardians of the world, for did not England rule the seas? and William Darling and his family were under Trinity, and viewed every order and regulation, as solemnly and simply as they viewed the Law and the Ten Commandments, except that the Law and the Ten Commandments might be broken—the Trinity Regulations never.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

## COMING EVENTS

GRACE's intense love of home was now to be tested thoroughly. The gentle little girl among the sea-birds, on her green oasis amidst the rush and thunder of the waves was now to be transported to a far more bleak and wild environment. For so cheerful and fun-loving a child to welcome the proposed change, seems strange, but of all the Darling children Grace was the only one for whom the mainland had no attractions ; and of all the children, she alone welcomed delightfully the prospect of life on a bare rock, exposed to the fullest fury of the sea.

The building of the Longstone Lighthouse marked a great development in the provisions for safety of the ships that passed the Farnes and a new era in the history of lighthouses.

To understand the inadequacy of the Brownsman Light, one must first study a map of the Farnes. It will be seen the chief dangers lie northward, out to sea ; the Harkers, the Longstone, and beyond them the worst rocks of all, the KnaveStone and the Whirl Rocks. The KnaveStone is the easternmost rock that dries, its top being eleven feet over low water, and shewing at two hours ebb. A quarter of a mile away to the N.E. are the Whirl Rocks, one of them has only two feet of water over it. The tide-streams over these rocks and the KnaveStone are extremely rapid and whirl in various directions, and vessels are recommended never to approach within two miles of them.

From the beginning, the Lights had been steadily pushing forward towards the open sea. First there had been a light on the Inner Farne, then on the Staples, then the Brownsman. Oil lamps had replaced the coal fires, and revolving lights with reflectors were now installed. But it must be remembered that while the first lighthouse under Trinity had been erected in the year 1680 and Trinity had gradually become the official lighting authority of the country, lighthouses were still in their infancy. In 1800 there were under forty lighthouses and floating lights on the whole of the British coasts and these were mostly under private ownership.

Not till 1824 was the Act passed empowering Trinity to acquire sea-marks from public or private bodies and to levy dues. In 1815 old Darling records that the Trinity yacht visited the Brownsman for the first time.

The lighting problem was serious. Electricity was unknown. Gas was being tried but it was subsequently found to be unsatisfactory. A big advance on the flat wick for oil lamps had been made by Argand with his invention of the cylindrical wick with a double current of air around it, and paraboloidal reflectors of highly polished metal. The Brownsman had been supplied with a revolving catopric or reflector light, shewing a bright flash every half minute, produced by Argand

lamps with chimneys and reflectors of silvered copper mounted on an iron frame and driven by clockwork.

Glass lenses were in process of invention. From 1819 to 1822 Buffon, Condorcet and Augustin Fresnel had been experimenting on lenses made in separate pieces, instead of ground out of a solid piece of glass. Fresnell was the first to try such lenses on a lighthouse. France was far ahead of us, and in 1824 the Commissioners of Northern Lighthouses sent their engineer Robert Stevenson to visit France and report. But it was not until 1834, the Commissioners sent Alan Stevenson to examine the merits of the dioptric system, and it was a long time after that before glass lenses were used here.

The Brownsman Light was not nearly strong enough, to guide vessels out at sea beyond the Outer Farnes. From 1823-1824 many wrecks with great loss of life occurred upon the Farnes. There was a terrific snowstorm on February 2nd, 1823, when the brig *George and Mary* struck on the east point of the Brownsman and all hands perished. On the same night, the brig *Fortitude* was lost on the Grahamstone with all hands, the *August* struck on some rocks near Holy Island and sank with all the crew, and no less than three vessels went ashore on Bamburgh sands. During 1824 other wrecks took place on the Knavestone, Blue Caps, Megstone, and Crumstone, with loss of life. It was plain the Brownsman Light needed to be further out. The only possible site was the Longstone, and that was only four feet above water at high tide, and frequently completely under water in exceptional tides and gales.

In 1824, the chief problem Trinity was facing was the building of lighthouses on rocks under, or nearly under, water. Smeaton had finally built the Eddystone as far back as 1759, but it had only been lit by a chandelier of twenty-four candles until 1807 when it came into Trinity's hands who installed Argand lamps. Robert Stevenson did not build the Bell Rock Tower until 1808-1811. In 1824, when it had been thoroughly tested, the Lighthouse Board printed and published his account of the operations and Trinity was stirred; a lighthouse could and should be built on the Longstone rock after the pattern of Stevenson's Bell Rock Tower.

On March 19th, 1825, the Trinity yacht came to the Brownsman with Captain Fullerton and Mr. Joseph Nelson, engineer, to make a survey for a proposed lighthouse on the Longstone. Lighthouses made of steel and iron frames, of iron plates, and of timber had been tried. But towers of masonry were coming into use. It had been found that a circular structure afforded the least resistance to wave force and wind pressure in any direction. A smooth surface was necessary, a gallery under the lantern alone being permitted. The height from the sea level to the top of the tower must be sufficient to avoid the obscuration of the light, by broken water or dense spray driving over the lantern. The force of the waves around the Longstone can be estimated by the fact that the height of the proposed tower was nearly a hundred feet.

The Brownsman Lighthouse had been only forty-three feet high with plenty of ground about it. The new home was to rise out of the



waves until in the upper rooms, one slept high in the air. The topmost room was to be Grace's, at first shared with her sister Betsy. Thomasin and Mary Ann were starting out to earn their living in Bamburgh.

All day long the sea would wash their doorstep : Grace would be close beside it, dibbling and dabbling in the little pools amongst the rocks ; each tide the sea would bring new playmates, treasures. The birds could rise from sand and grass, extend their wings and soar into the ether, and now Grace could soar, too, and look down over the sea and islands as a bird may do. From a bedroom window, eighty feet above the waves, she could gaze right over the Bluecaps and the Harkers. The room would be round ; she could see the white foam on the Knave-stone, too, the seals upon the Crumstone.

"Of all the family, Grace was the one that looked forward to the Longstone," say her descendants.

The time of the building of the Longstone came with the nesting time of the sea-birds. They arrived to find the loneliness invaded by the crash of hammer and the clink of chisel. First, stone barracks were erected for the workmen to lodge in ; Mr. Nelson, the architect, and Thomas Wade, the foreman, stopped with the Darlings on the Brownsman, and Grace was tucked into the coble that went back and forth all day.

"Billyboys " or sloops were coming with the stones from Bromley Fall Quarry, in Yorkshire, shipped at Selby, near Leeds, masons, labourers, and boys came over from the main each day, a small fleet of boatmen being commissioned to carry them. All through April and May and June the guillemots and puffins, the gentle terns and savage cormorants, crowded the Pinnacles and Staples, the Brownsman and the Inner Farne, as usual, but there were many depredators this year : and the cries of the birds were drowned by the crashes and collisions of iron, steel and stone.

The barracks became tenanted, but the boatmen still plied from the land with extra workers. The surface of the rock was cut into regular horizontal benches into which the stones were carefully dovetailed or notched. The base had to be enormous to stand the strain that was to be imposed on it. Day by day, the little girl of ten stood looking up at the huge pile that was rising ; its immense size called to mind a fortress. Many are oppressed by the massiveness and grimness of that tremendous structure : but to Grace, the lighthouse was the natural edifice that Trinity would raise ; a greater power than the hurtling billows ; a rock and fortress of the kind the Bible wrote about, whereon and wherein the weakest might feel completely safe.

Benign, wonderful Trinity, before whose power the sea waxed into insignificance ! Dependable, unalterable Trinity, in whose service there were no dismissals, only promotions. Work was hard to get and keep on the Mainland, as William and Job were finding : fishing was more uncertain still, as William Swan and Thomas Cuthbertson and the Robsons could testify, which was why Father put his boys into trades on shore ; but with Trinity, one had only to do one's duty faithfully :

the simple daily duties of keeping everything in spotless order, bright, and clean, and forever and ever, one would live in security and comfort.

Grace was now of an age when she was old enough to understand something of the family problem, and the change to the Longstone came when Mr. Darling was confronted with the task of putting his family into self-supporting callings. There was never any thought of sending Grace away to earn her living. She was far too timid and retiring. But she was not afraid of the sightseers or workmen : they seemed to be apart from her ; and yet visitors were coming who in later years were to be inextricably mixed up with her destiny, and whose whole life in one case, she was to affect. These visitors could hardly have been further apart in their human callings.

The building of the Longstone came before no less a personage than the Third Duke of Northumberland, Lord Lieutenant of the County, and Vice Admiral of the Coast. Now the Third Duke of Northumberland happened to be a man of unusual intelligence who took the greatest interest in scientific discoveries. Educated at Cambridge, later on he was chosen to succeed the Prince Consort in promoting the scientific development of the University. As Vice-Chancellor, the Duke presented a telescope to the observatory which still bears his name. He had an absolute passion for going into the minutest detail of any matter which he considered lay within his province : and the welfare of the Coast was one of these.

The New Lighthouse interested him for more than one reason. That year he had been to France as Ambassador Extraordinary to the Coronation of Charles X at Rheims. France and England alike had been impressed by the lavishness and magnificence of his entourage. His ancestor, the Fifth Earl of Northumberland, had been one of the ten lords appointed to wait on Francis the First at the Field of the Cloth of Gold, and the Third Duke Hugh felt it his duty to maintain the traditions of his ancestors. He also, very wisely, deemed it of great importance to establish the prestige of England in view of the serious financial troubles the Nation was undergoing.<sup>1</sup>

This passion for detail and duty, together with his ardent interest in scientific invention, had in all probability made him acquainted with the discoveries and experiments in light-keeping then taking place in France, and on his return from that country, what more natural than that he should come himself to make a personal inspection and investigation of the new lighthouse rising in his own domain ? So, when the tower was nearly finished and before the lantern was installed, he arrived in the *Mermaid* cutter.

For the whole of their lives William Darling's children never tired of talking of the Duke's visit. Their grandchildren to-day tell of the profound impression it made. "The greatest day of their lives," they

<sup>1</sup> In view of these, he also insisted on paying himself the entire cost of the expedition, and asked that his salary as Lord-Lieutenant should be reduced by half.

said. The Duke was keenly interested in boys. (Later he sent one of the Darlings' boys to the school his father, the Second Duke, had founded in Alnwick for 500 poor boys, all Church of England.) He found the Darlings admirably sound. The Duke admired their thrift ; in spite of his magnificence, he also was thrifty. He liked their diligence ; he also was diligent. He asked questions about the island life, the birds ; if they caught much fish ? How many rows of potatoes they had planted ? What else they grew ?

Grace remained in the background, too shy to be anything but over-awed at so stupendous a personage. How could she ever have dreamed—even in the furthest flights of imagination—that His Grace would one day be her guardian, offering to take the watch he had given her, next time he went to London, and have it properly cleaned. It was not to be surprised at, however, that he had paid a visit to the wonder of the tower. It was cleaving the blue now, so high that Grace felt dizzy when she looked up at it, and indeed had to crane up until one almost fell backwards to see the magic window which was to be hers.

The coming of the second visitor was equally natural. On December 17th, when most of the workmen had been paid off, the second visitor arrived ; John Wheldon, a poor boy, born in Newcastle-on-Tyne of humble parents, who had come to London in his infancy and whose only education had been at the famous Silver Street Sunday-school. He was eighteen and was sent, with two others, to erect the lantern.

When a lad of sixteen, John Wheldon had been employed at a classical booksellers, Hays in Henrietta Street, but had left it to work with the firm who installed the lantern. He was dour, reserved, with a moonish visage, long upper-lip and deep-set eyes ; but he was of great tenacity both of purpose and affections. Grace, ten years old, smiling, happy, gentle, found nothing to be afraid of in a lad like her own brothers. He shared her enthusiasm for the tower. He marvelled at her knowledge of the natural wonders round them, at her fearlessness, her diligence, her undeviating cheerfulness and kindness. It was a wonderful Christmas season for the hard-featured, determined lad who was introduced for the first time to natural science. William Darling perceived John Wheldon's intelligence and grit : a friendship was begun which brought him back to the lighthouse, year after year. He saw Grace grow in charm, as well as stature. She won and kept his heart. When he died, nearly fifty years after Grace's short life ended, the *Times* recorded in his obituary, he was known for being a great admirer of Grace Darling. For her sake, he remained a bachelor all his life. The visit to and friendship with the Darlings, had further influence.

John Wheldon returned to London and bookselling, and in time started a shop of his own in which he featured books on natural history and scientific subjects : he worked steadily upward. His classified catalogues became known as the most interesting and valuable in the trade. Finally, he developed his business, John Wheldon & Co., into the great firm of scientific booksellers handling the scientific periodicals and publications of the Learned Societies that is now known as Wheldon

and Wesley. In 1862 the firm became the English agents of the Smithsonian Institute.

There was to be a curious connection between the Third Duke and John Wheldon.

Alexander Smithson, illegitimate son of the First Duke, was the half-brother of the Second Duke. He shared the Third Duke's interest in Science, devoted a lonely and unhappy life to scientific research in France and England; inherited large fortunes on his mother's side; took the name of Smithson, his father's family, and left his fortune, refused by the English Government because he was illegitimate, to the America, his half-brother, the Second Duke, had so ardently sympathized with in the War of Independence. Duke Hugh II's portrait hangs in Boston Town Hall: Alexander Smithson's name is commemorated by the Smithsonian Institute in Washington; John Wheldon became agent for it in 1862 and his firm still represents it here.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### THE MOVE TO THE LONGSTONE

THE Longstone Light was first lighted on February 15th, 1826, and Brownsman Light extinguished; and Trinity was well pleased with the result for with the exception of one passing incident in the fog, when a vessel got too near the rocks, no wrecks occurred in its vicinity for the next six years.

The change in Grace's environment and conditions was profound.

The Brownsman Island was forty feet above the sea, with a comparatively large extent of rough pasturage, with gardens, and a certain amount of wild life on it not only sea-birds but rabbits and rats and also domestic animals. When William Brooks (who in later years succeeded his father as light-keeper upon the Longstone) took exception to any addition to his light-keeper's duties, his father replied, "Should you find the work too much for you, you must be aware that they do not require you to keep cow or calf or work land; that is only *a favour* granted to industry." The favour of maintaining his gardens on the Brownsman and such animals as he had, was granted to William Darling when he moved to the Longstone where neither grass nor flower could grow. There were wild flowers on the Brownsman; the Danish scurvy grass with its cruciform blossoms, appropriately enough, the cross-bearers; the sea campion (double *silene maritima*) of the clove pink order, very nearly related to the bladder campion but with much larger flowers; the many clustered goosefoot, a form of the red goosefoot, so called from being like a goose's foot in shape. There were flowers in the Brownsman garden too. "The stock July flowers you got from Mr. Troth last year seems to be the best flower that ever was in the garden, was much admired by Mr. Cooly," his father wrote to William Brooks.

On the Longstone, the birds as well as the flowers had gone. The high

seas that washed the rocks would prove fatal to the sea-birds' eggs. The Longstone was no breeding-place.

But when William Howitt visited the rock fifteen years after, he found the gentlest and lightest of the sea-birds darting about the rock in snowy clouds. "He (William Darling) has laid sand for them along the ledge of rocks opposite to the lighthouse and does not allow them to be plundered; and so they haunt there in a flock of hundreds and make a continual noise, which I have no doubt in that solitude and in the absence of other living creatures, is pleasant enough to him. He says none came there till he thus cared for them, and there are now hundreds which arrive in spring like other swallows, and stay the summer. Thus even wild creatures of the sea and air acknowledge kindness."

On the side of the island facing North Sunderland was a small bay called Sunderland Hole, above this, convenient for passage back and forth between the island and the mainland, stood the barracks, a stone building with a lean-to shed on the lighthouse side. Then came two low buildings, one the oil store, another also probably some sort of storehouse. The Darlings kept considerable supplies of food; a letter from William Darling throws light on the family shopping: "We, thinking the bag had not arrived said nothing. Next time the boat came, no bag. Enquiry had to be made and we received it at last but having been ten days on the Passage the peas was nearly gone to manure, but all the rest was good as ever. The beans have been a part of my mess every day since." They must have had stores in quantities or they could never have fed nineteen people for three days, as they did ten years hence.

The lighthouse stood at the eastern point with the boat-house against it, in the most sheltered portion of the island, with the entrance facing the haven in which the Darlings kept their boat in fair weather. The haven was protected by the reef of rocks, frequented by the terns. Then came a stretch of rock, with a ladder leading to the sea for use at low tide—above the miniature terrace, stone steps led up to the front door of the lighthouse. The lighthouse was quite a commodious dwelling. The kitchen was in the base, and by the front door, a door on the immediate right, led straight into it. Slightly on the left was the winding staircase leading upwards. Above this was a bedroom eighteen feet in diameter, with several bunks built in round the walls. Above this again, was a bedroom twelve feet in diameter, and still another ten feet in diameter, this being further cut into by the spiral staircase which encircled the lighthouse on its way to the topmost story, the lantern. All the rooms, of course, were circular. The kitchen afforded transients with a shakedown. A contemporary picture, painted by Henry Perlee Parker, who was on friendly terms with the family and spent some time with them, gives a vivid idea of their one living-room.

The old-fashioned guns of Mr. Darling and his son hang immediately over the door opening into the steps outside. There is a high and rather clumsy cupboard, obviously home-made, on the left of the door, with two shelves of stuffed sea-birds. Mr. Darling's watch, carefully removed

when its owner went out in stormy weather, hangs on its strap from a nail and a big key on another. By the cupboard is Mrs. Darling's spinning wheel, and on a large round board on the floor, there are household utensils, a pipkin and a bowl of apples or potatoes. The floor is of flagged stones. A string of onions hangs beside the guns, towards the fireplace whose grate is set high with hobs and ovens on each side.

Above the fireplace, one gets an insight into the furnishing of a Northumbrian kitchen at that time. A kettle swings from a hook and there are several other hooks and a sort of crane with movable supports attached to the side of the grate. Under the mantelpiece is the large round salt box, nice and dry, a kettle-holder, and other household trifles, whole on the wall above, hang a shovel for the bread oven, a three-legged trivet, saucepan lids, sieve, flour shaker and nutmeg grater. On the shelf are two pewter dishes, two flat irons, tea-caddy, sugar box, and an old-fashioned oil lamp. On the opposite wall to the door, between the fireplace and the window, is a rail for men's hats, on which also two women's bonnets hang. They are of plainest straw, obviously used whenever the women go outside just as the men's caps were.

A small bird in a cage hangs by the window, with a stout shutter of planks below the sill, for protection in rough weather; beside the window is a solid chest of drawers with a big Bible, and a painted tray set up behind it against the wall. There is another case of stuffed sea-birds, including a grebe. These birds appear everywhere with somewhat disconcerting intimacy, as if they were perching in every available spot in an already far too crowded room. In the picture Mrs. Darling is shewn in a frilled mob cap with her spectacles pushed up over it, while she holds one of the old-time coffee pots with its flat projecting handle by means of which it can be set on the coals of a glowing fire without inconvenience. There is a curious roughness and austerity about the house-place; everything seems so solid as if fashioned to resist the violence of the elements. The Darlings had some good pieces of furniture. Mr. Darling's library is still preserved in a fine old glass-fronted bookcase, Grace's armchair is still shewn by her niece, George Alexander's daughter, Mrs. Roberts of Seahouses, a substantial and indeed elegant piece of Sheraton design with a stuffed seat.

William, we hear, came over for a few days after he went to work as a joiner on the main, and made them a sofa. There was a grandfather clock and armchairs. But the dwelling in Mr. Parker's picture has not the look of an inland cottage. The walls so massive and rounded, with the staircase floor winding over the fireplace, are those of a stronghold.

Life on the Longstone presented some domestic difficulties. Water for drinking and for household purposes was sometimes a problem. Rainwater was kept in underground tanks, which they called "the well." Barrels of drinking water were brought from the main, as the spray of the sea splashed sometimes into the tanks. There was a pump from one of these underground tanks into the scullery. But a dry season sadly troubled the housekeepers. "I have sent your caps that were made up

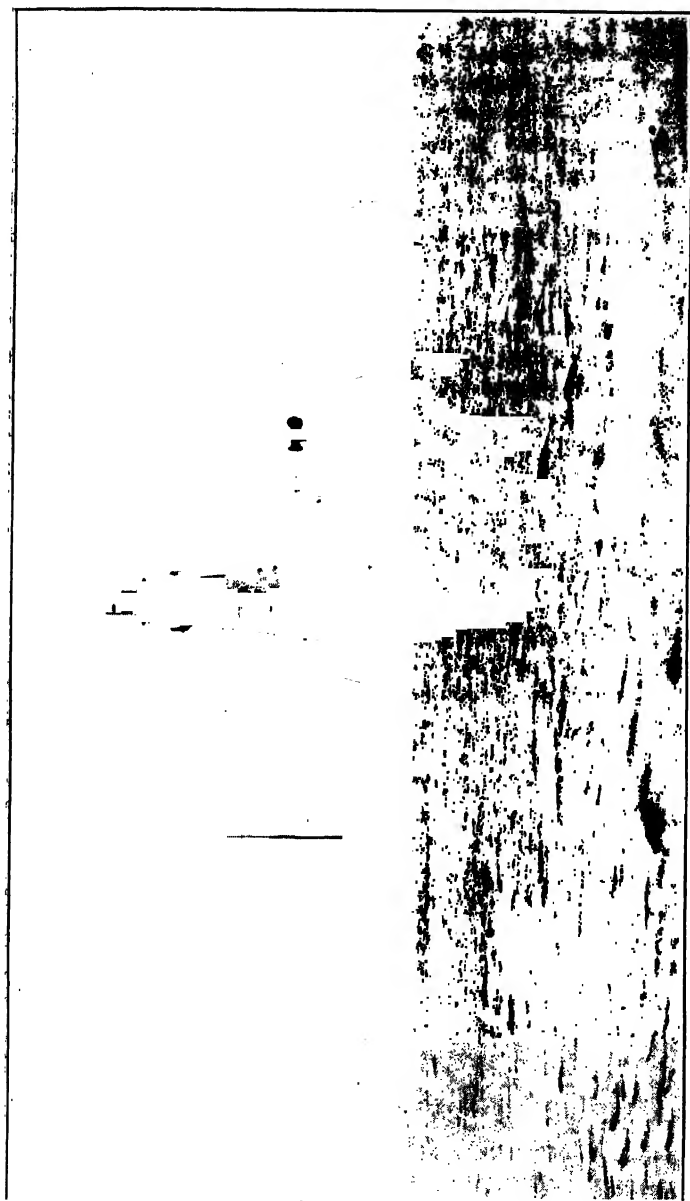
for me at Sunderland," writes Grace to her sister Thomasin, when Thomasin had left to set up as a dressmaker at Bamburgh. "You will be surprised when you see I have sent them unwashed, but we are so badly off for water, we have five weeks' clothes dirty and not a drop of water to wash them with, and only about two ankens in the well for dog or cat. I wish you could wish us to a good wet day." Except for this, the kitchen seems to have been fitted up conveniently, for old Darling records a plumber's visit later, to repair water pipes, wash boiler and the kitchen range.

The duties of the light-keeper were now more onerous. A pole for marking the rise and fall of the tides had been put down by the west side of the tower, and the Darlings had to give an account for every hour of daylight. William Darling also marked the time when the different sunk rocks were covered, with the rate at which the tides ran through the different guts. It will be seen how valuable this exact knowledge was to prove, both to old Darling and his daughter, also to William Brooks, the youngest son. Then the gardens and goats on the Brownsman entailed daily visits which the elder children could be trusted to make in the family coble. The whole family led a kind of amphibious existence. There was not only traffic between the islands and the main and fishing excursions but regular perpetual voyaging amongst these rocks through their perilous guts, while methodical observation of tides and currents proceeded; a wonderful training against the coming hour of need.

The herring fishing became more important after the move to the Longstone.

On another occasion when the painters were at work on the Longstone, the light-keeper chronicles: "July 17. Caught above two hundred herrings at Herring Hole, Longstone. Aug. 3. This morning they were in, but before the net could be got to work, they were gone, except eight washed on shore. Aug. 23. Caught five barrels of herrings and Brook and painter went to North Sunderland, and sold them at 8s. the barrel. Aug. 26. Caught 4 barrels at the same place with  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the net, and the painters caught full two barrels with an old hamper. Sept. 23 and 24. The herrings plentiful but being overstocked, only took 360 at the point with a hamper and some on the flat." Grace certainly lived in contact with the sea, with shoals of herrings playing about the front door.

Such familiar, immediate association with the elements of air and water engenders a different attitude to those elements, even in their wildest turmoil, than that which sheltered landmen feel. Fishermen are more or less at home upon the water, but their wives and children live ashore and there is a constant sense of peril and uncertainty in those who watch for the return of the herring boats. But when one's only abiding place is the midst of the deep, one must take a partly aqueous view of life. Moreover, within an indomitable lighthouse far above the most furious onslaught of the billows, with its six feet depth of wall forming a solid barrier against cold and noise, a sense of dominion is natural. Within the lighthouse, there is not only safety and comfort, but peace.



THE LONGSTONE LIGHT—TO-DAY





The lantern sends out a firm and positive warning to those adrift, but the light-keeper is always safe.

Moreover, in the case of the Darlings, the Farnes were a domestic region whose resources were a valuable property, whose tricks and awkwardnesses had to be ingeniously and scientifically studied and mastered. The treacherous currents, racing tides, between them and their goats and cabbages, had to be circumvented. The herrings had to be dried on the rocks ; the gardens must be weeded ; the bait must be prepared for the fishing. When there is a family of healthy youngsters, boys and girls with no distractions, no companions, no space for running and romping, something has to be found for them to do.

The Darlings had another means of revenue. Storms brought all kinds of salvage to the Darlings' Station : " 1824, Dec. 23. Picked up four logs timber 124 feet belonging to Messrs. Railstine and Naim. Had got adrift from Holy Island. They sold for £14 and I received for salvage £1 10s. 1829, June 21. Picked up a ship's boat near Glororum shoal, marked Jas. S. Nesbit ; belonging to a Leith smack. I wrote to Leith and the captain sent a boat from Holy Island for her and I got salvage £1."

" 1846, Aug. 29th, about 11 a.m. wind N. by E. fresh breeze, thick fog, the sloop *Volunteer*, of Charleston, Scotland, bound to Hartlepool in ballast, got on the Knavestone Rock, and after lying near two hours, got off apparently little damaged and proceeded on her voyage, leaving an anchor and 30 fathoms chain and small kedge. Aug. 20. Wm. Darling and Wm. Brooks (Darling) weighed the anchor and chain and brought them into Shepherds Hole. Afterwards received £2 3s. 6d. for salvage."

William Darling and his sons never hesitated between saving life or gaining profits by the salvage of the cargo. Many entries tell of the saving of the crew and total loss of freight and vessel. Nor did he or his sons ever grudge imperilling their lives for a single sailor or fisherman.

Over and over again the lighthouse served as a hotel or hospital for those who had come to grief amongst those black rocks whose splintered summits broke the waves. How quick the transit from a waste of foam and fury to the solidly appointed comfort of a Victorian home ! One moment at the mercy of the roaring flood ; the next, in the quiet kitchen with Mrs. Darling at her spinning, " singing hinnies " on the girdle, pretty gentle girls busy with the tea or coffee, turning the sizzling fish in the pan, or basting a brace of wild duck browning at the fire ; with the children at their books, or tumbling about in a corner with the puppy. And not a sound of the storm within that busy congerie of talk and laughter. What a welcome the distressed stranger found ! Amidst the many tributes paid to the Darling family their hospitality and kindness to anyone in need of help, is the most paramount.

## CHAPTER NINE

## THE SCHOOL IN THE LANTERN

WILLIAM DARLING's relationship to his family seems to have been that of a kindly and intelligent skipper to his devoted crew. Discipline in a lighthouse is as essential as discipline in a ship. Discipline and duty were the commonplaces of existence to the Darling children. In late years Grace wrote to a correspondent : " You will perhaps be aware that our duties as light-keepers requires one person to be in attendance at this season almost every hour out of the twenty-four, Sunday to Saturday." There was no assistant light-keeper at the Brownsman, now, and as soon as they were old enough to help, the children were expected to lend a hand. All the family were light-keepers. This acceptance of their common responsibility to the Light, must be remembered in view of circumstances to come.

The chief interest and purpose of life centred in the Lantern, where watch must be kept throughout the night, and many hours spent daily in cleaning the lamps and reflectors. The lantern was akin to the bridge of a vessel, combined with the enchanting privacy of the skipper's cabin. The thick walls of the lighthouse shut out the roar of wind and wave, but up in the lantern with its hollow roof, the noise was tremendous. Against the windows of the lantern migrating birds might crash. From its windows, one might command an infinite prospect of the islands. A fascinating place for small boys and girls.

In the lantern their beloved father held his school. William Darling's children adored him. Firm he might be, but he was extraordinarily tolerant, and the love of his children was founded on deep respect. Their father was their chief centre of interest. A Victorian father he certainly was, whose word was law, but in all the letters extant between the Darling family, long after boys and girls had gone out to the Main, there is never a hint of rebellion against, or resentment of, his control.

Their schooldays in the lantern were a delight to Grace and all of them. In the kitchen Thomasin, their mother, taught the girls housewifely duties which they performed obediently enough, but in the lantern they went into their father's world. A world of action, adventure, imagination, knowledge, where they learned of the far countries and the peoples beyond those tossing seas beneath them and around them, on which they watched the vessels and fishing-boats for ever voyaging. William Darling knew all about them ; where they were going, what they carried. It was exactly like watching a high road. The sea was full of vessels carrying goods from one port to another from the north of Scotland down to London.

The Farnes do not lie in the path of the great ships outward bound, for most ocean routes lie to the south ; but in the days before railways, and when roads were bad, the coasting traffic was tremendous. In his *Journal* William Darling records punctiliously the vessels sighted :

brigs, barques, sloops, schooners, galliots and doggers : packets and smacks, keels, tenders, and, of course, the local coble.

Alan Stevenson's Lighthouse Regulations in 1848, provided that "A book, containing a note of the vessels passing each lighthouse, shall keep ; and an annual schedule, shewing the number of vessels in each month, shall be sent."

The bark with square sails on the mainmast and foremost mast ; the barquentine with the square rig on the foremast only ; the brig with two masts and square sails on both ; schooners, fore-and-aft, topsail, and main topsail ; sloops with one mast only and a jib-stay ; Dutch galliots carrying a main and mizzen mast and a large gaff-mainsail ; doggers, the Dutch fishing vessels ; packets, with mail and passengers ; smacks, small fishing vessels, or in the coasting trade ; keels, the low flat-bottomed coal barges from Newcastle.

A highway dotted with white sails, many on regular routes to be looked for and expected ; strangers coming into sight afar, to be watched, a source of speculation ; occasionally a private yacht or cutter ; now and again, on state occasions, a convoy of ships and vessels, when the islands would be decorated and so form part of the event.

With these wide, eventful seas, full of traffic, there was none of the confinement of a schoolroom in a parsonage with the bleak Haworth moors about it ; none of the shut-in feeling of a house in Wimpole Street. Autocrat, William Darling might be but there was no cruelty in his nature. His children were brought up to be independent ; not only had they to meet the everyday adventures of those dangerous shores but they would have to go out into the world and earn their livings. In the school in the lantern, William Darling did his best to fit his children for life upon the Main.

A letter from Grace to someone who wrote for a description of life in her lighthouse home, contains authentic information about these lessons.

"I have been brought up on the islands, learned to read and write by my parents, and knit, spin and sew. . . . Our books are principally Divinity, the authors, Bishop Wilson, Willison, Boston, Milton, Hervey, Bunyan, Ambrose, Newton, Marshall, Cowper, Flavel, Baxter and others, with a good many of the Religious Tract Society's publications . . . and geography, history, voyages and travels with maps, so that father can shew us any part of the world, and give us a description of the people, manners, and customs, so it is our own blame if we be ignorant of either what is done, or what ought to be done."

A wonderful purpose in that education !

To know what is done, and what ought to be done. How unquestioningly his little flock would accept their father's dictum on such matters. The children's faith was not unsettled by other authorities on what was done in the far-off world. William Darling's code of morals and standards and customs was theirs. They knew no other.

"Romances, novels and plays, are books my father will not allow a place for in our house, for he says they are throwing away time," wrote

Grace. The only romances which were allowed entrance were the old Border ballads, which Grace memorized, and of which she was passionately fond. So Grace and her family got no impression of the way other people lived, except on their visits to the Main. These were brief, and only to Bamburgh or Belford or North Sunderland.

"Indeed, I have no time to spare, but when I have been on the Main I am quite surprised to see people generally after what they call getting their day's work done; they sit down, some to play cards, which I do not understand, perhaps as well, for my father says they are the Devil's books,"<sup>1</sup> wrote Grace in the above-mentioned letter.

William Darling brought up his children to read and enjoy sermons, histories and travels with the Bible as supreme foundation. Religion was considered of great importance by the Darling parents, all the more so as they were orthodox church people and conscious of their remoteness from the ministration and instruction of the clergy. Neither William nor Thomasin Darling felt anything but complete faith in and acceptance of the doctrines of the Established Church. Grace says her parents taught her "The Established Church Catechism and likewise the General Assembly's Short Catechism, and explained them to the best of their power." They read sermons, because they had no opportunity of listening to them. William Darling was a thinker, and of sterling independence in his own sphere and domain. But he was "under orders" and the established authorities, whether of Church, rank, or Trinity, were unquestioned by him, or his.

There seem to have been no little rebels in the school in the lantern. The copybooks and sum books exist now. Beautiful examples of clear script and patient figures in home-made foolscap books, with the sums set forth in ink—without a smudge or blot or an erasure. They are the school books of children who took pride and pleasure in their work. An underlying and inherent lack of constraint, for all the discipline, is perpetually revealed as one studies this family. The difference between their letters written to each other, and the letters sent by Grace and her father to the people they consider their superiors, is striking. Family letters are unpunctuated, careless in spelling, free and easy in expression and grammar. Grace sitting down to write to her sisters or brothers on the Main, let her pen run on without check. But when she wrote to the donors of gifts, to the agent at Bamburgh Castle (Mr. Smeddle), or to the many officials who sent tributes to her, her handwriting is the most beautiful Italian script, her expressions carefully chosen for all their spontaneity, and her grammar on the whole, correct. Spelling mistakes occur, but frequently through old-fashioned usage and custom.

The handwriting of the most careless letters is, however, always clear, and never cramped. There was no rigidity about the Darlings' training. When it was their duty, they were taught to write with care; when they

<sup>1</sup> William Darling was no Puritan, but a relative had come to trouble through card-playing, and Darling was afraid of his own lads being tempted when they went on to the Main.

were communicating with each other, they were very plainly and happily free.

Education was not all from school books, either, nor confined to theology, history and geography. Music played a large part in the family life. William Darling was no mean violinist and nothing delighted him more than to march up and down the floor of the lighthouse, fiddling and whistling, with a string of youngsters behind him. His yeomanry exercises and training stood him in good stead for the amusement of his children. Music and marching were a great recreation for wet weather. His manuscript music book still can be seen, in which he has written out about a hundred and fifty airs. The melody is on one line only for his violin, and the manuscript is characterized by the exquisite neatness which pervades his letters and *Journal*. As the titles shew, he found in music an outlet for liveliness. The Oyster Wives' Rant, Warm Broth, The humours of New Gravel Lane, Smash the Windows, the Devil among the Taylors, Push about the Jorum, Stir your feet Johnny, Whistle and I'll come to you, my lad, all sound gay.

The religious trend of Grace's thought suggests a grave character, but Grace, though deep and serious about matters which she considered called for solemn thinking, shared her father's love of jollity.

One must perceive the essential good humour of the man, over six feet high, exceedingly handsome, who brought up his children to the healthiest of outdoor life; taught them the use of their hands in every way, for Darling had all a sailor's cleverness and ingenuity in making models, boxes, stuffing and mounting birds; and filled their days with interest and instruction which did not curb their sense of awe and wonder. It is important to stress the fact that Grace did not come of a sickly family, nor did she lead a life that engendered delicacy. In those days children had a trick of dying young. All the Darling children reached maturity; most, old age. There is no record of any childish complaints from which the grandchildren subsequently suffered. That the children were not thwarted or suppressed is surely proved by their good health. On the whole William Darling's school in the lantern seems to have been a success.

## CHAPTER TEN

### “ONE TOUCH OF NATURE . . .”

GRACE DARLING as a naturalist is a new idea. But there can be no question that she shared her father's enthusiasm for natural history, and this enthusiasm together with their unrivalled opportunities on the Farnes brought them into contact and friendship with many leading naturalists. Both Grace and William Darling took part in the furnishing of one of the first natural history museums in England, now known as the Hancock Museum, of Newcastle-on-Tyne. The Darling's contributions were received with respect and interest from the Learned

Societies at Berwick-on-Tweed and Newcastle-on-Tyne. Grace's collection of sea-birds' eggs remains in her father's home, but her collection of sea-shells was presented to Berwick Museum, and in 1852 the Annals of the Berwick Natural History Society record a paper read, in which constant reference was made to her collection.

Amongst all the burgeonings of the beginning of the nineteenth century, the growth of interest in natural history in common with other natural sciences was one of the most striking developments, and the North of England led the way.<sup>1</sup>

It is curious that with the beginning of the age of mechanical civilization, destined to destroy the natural beauties of our country, the passion for investigating and preserving our fauna and flora, and above all, our birds, had birth. The superstitions which had been attached to every phase of wild life began to give place to a reverent love for all life that animates such portions of the earth as are undesired by man. Northumbria was the land of the first recorder of bird life, Bewick, and Newcastle might well be termed the lodestar of the naturalist. In the year 1822 the Newcastle Literary and Philosophical Society acquired a collection of natural history specimens, the nucleus around which the Hancock Museum was developed. In 1829 the famous Natural History Society of Northumberland, Durham and Newcastle-upon-Tyne was formed with the Third Duke as patron of Northumberland and the Right Rev. the Lord Bishop of Durham as President. One of the Vice-Presidents was P. J. Selby, a noted ornithologist, whose paper on "Bewick's Swan," purporting to be a new species, was the first to be read before the Society.

In connection with this paper William Darling's *Journal* states:

"April 6th, 1830. I shot three Egyptian geese, and sent a pair to Newcastle Museum; the other to Mr. Selby, Twizle House."

Could Darling's goose have been the origin of Bewick's Swan?

Here was common ground on which all classes of the community could meet. William Darling, light-keeper, and his daughter Grace, in the simplest and most natural way could observe and note the habits of the rare birds at their very door. Nature's writing could be read by all, humble or high, unlettered or learned, and all with opportunities for observation could contribute to the common stock of knowledge of the universe. No woman figures in the records of the Natural History Societies, but Grace was an exception to customary femininity: her devotion to nature was not considered eccentric: as we have already seen in the account of her pet the eider-duck, it was regarded as one more proof of her humane disposition. And the light-keeper's daughter was also a pleasing figure in the general campaign to educate the lowly.

Picture the age, with the new museum just come into existence. In 1835 the Northumberland Natural History Committee opened the museum to all comers on one evening in the month, and for the first

<sup>1</sup> The British Association for the Advancement of Science was founded in York in 1831.

time in our country's history a museum was thrown open to the public, free, "with a view towards assisting the diffusion of a taste for Natural Science amongst the working classes. . . . The interest excited was so great, and the people came in crowds so large, as to fill the whole building and totally defeat the end your Committee has in view. . . ."

The museum was opened from 12 to 4, and on holidays, and an invitation was extended to school children and teachers.

"Whilst most kindred institutions confine admission to members and strangers introduced by themselves, or charge money, we have pursued the opposite system, wishing to incite as many as possible to admire and study the beautiful works of nature. Besides admitting the public we have invited the attendance of the working classes and their families upon holidays, and for their convenience have occasionally lighted the museum rooms in an evening . . ." ran the Committee's report. "In this way several thousand persons have been admitted to the museum; and although the attention of the keeper of the rooms was necessarily divided, it is with pride and pleasure that we declare that we are not aware of the injury or abstraction of a single article, although hundreds of interesting objects are necessarily loose and portable."

This led to museums all over the country opening in like manner.<sup>1</sup>

It was an age of youth, in every sense, but an age of great devoutness and high ideals. When the very first museum (the Wyclife collection) was opened in George Allan's house, the owner desired to share his treasure with all who wished to enjoy them, and opened his museum to public inspection in June 1792. In three and a half years 7,327 persons visited it. The admission card was designed by Bewick. The two inner apartments were each entered through an arch upon which mottoes were painted. The first—"These are Thy glorious Works, Parent of Good," and the second, "O Lord, how manifold are Thy works—in wisdom thou hast made them all: the earth is full of Thy riches (*sic*)."

These lines are the keynote of Grace Darling's enthusiasm for the wonders round her: in the shells, the sea-birds, the rocks, the waves, she found perpetual evidence of the wise provision of a great Creator, a wisdom she accepted with perfect trust as infallible. She was thoughtful beyond her years, writes a relative; all these studies as her father's close companion, developed the reflective side of her nature, while her passionate and comprehensive love of all wild creatures filled Grace's heart, kept her intelligence and affections ardently alive, and satisfied her so completely that the Longstone was the dearest spot on earth to her, and she belonged to it as perfectly and happily as did the sea-birds; more so, for Grace never felt the impulse of migration.

There William Darling resided, a permanent Court of Appeal on the minutest habits of the rarest specimens of rock and sea; and to William

<sup>1</sup> The specimens received by the Newcastle Museum were remarkable sometimes for value, sometimes for sheer incongruity. His Imperial Highness, the Emperor of Russia, presented a collection of the fossils and rocks of the Russian Empire; but "specimens of corn reduced to a cinder" and "drawing of a locomotive engine by Master Robert Dunn" (aged 8) were also treasured.



Darling the naturalists of Newcastle turned, in letter, or in person, sure of his accuracy, his patience, his thoroughness and his goodwill to aid in their researches.<sup>1</sup>

William Darling's friends were not only the fishermen with whom his boys consorted, and with whom they ranked, ashore. He and Grace had interests of a different kind. They were the joint helpers, and William Darling the unofficial correspondent, of the coming great naturalists of the era.

What a delightful place the lighthouse was, with few or none of the regulations that Alan Stevenson drew up in 1848, and the freedom and harvest of the sea about the family in their stone stronghold, hospitable to all their visitors, ready and able to share with them the secrets of the rocks and ocean, as well as their fireside and their homely fare ! What a resort for the young naturalists who were so enthusiastically taking part in the founding of the Natural History Society in Newcastle-on-Tyne. Among the first list of its staff, Albany Hancock, aged twenty-one, was Curator for Ornithology, while young William Hewitson, aged twenty-three, was Curator of Entomology ; with them, were other young men.

It is told that Albany Hancock's brother, John, as a young man thought nothing of leaving his home in Newcastle at three in the morning and walking to the coast and back, especially at the time of the migration of the birds.

William Hewitson was practising as a land surveyor in Newcastle, but he was a neighbour of Richard Wingate, the taxidermist, and spent much time with him. In 1833 he and his friends John Hancock and Benjamin Johnson went to Norway to visit the breeding places of the birds which migrate here for winter. They packed their baggage on a cart and set off on foot for the Arctic Circle. They returned in three months' time, with many treasures. Just the sort of young men Grace, a girl of seventeen, would find worth while !

During Grace's girlhood, these young men were visiting and corresponding with William Darling about the habits of the birds, their eggs, their nesting places, their mating seasons, their relations to their young, and also about his sea-shells. She was fourteen when the Northumberland Natural History Society was founded ; Robert had gone to school in Bamburgh but Grace with her twin brothers, nine years old, was still having lessons in the school in the lantern, for her copy-book exists with her signature and date 1829. During the next five years, references occur in various letters to the young men's visits to the Longstone where Grace was now the only girl at home. Her collections prove that she took part in the general enthusiasm ; and it is certainly a new light on her life to see her joining in this youthful search for knowledge and eagerness for its general importation : Grace Darling as the friend and fellow-naturalist of Albany Hancock and William Hewitson sounds incredible, but there is no doubt she knew them and knew them well.

<sup>1</sup> A lengthy and minute report of the birds upon the Farnes, with the number of eggs, character of nests, and breeding habits, exists in William Darling's handwriting.

In partial proof of this, are the letters of Henry Hewitson, of Seaton Burn House, Newcastle-on-Tyne, and Bank Top House (later Cliff House), Cullercoats, of whom William Hewitson was nephew and heir. Henry Hewitson kept a boat at Cullercoats and paid visits to the lighthouse. Several letters exist from him to William Darling, which shew the friendly relations of the family. As far back as 1829, Darling was writing of Mr. Henry Hewitson's interest in his boys; his promise to have Job apprenticed at Newcastle, come to his house and work for him; his report that Job's master is very satisfied with him, etc.

In one of these following letters we hear of Wm. Hewitson, the youthful Curator of Entomology, pouncing on some curious beetles found in the stomachs of some eider-ducks.

From Henry Hewitson, Seaton Burn, to Wm. Darling, Longstone.

Seaton Bevan (?),  
March 13th, 1833.

Mr. Darling, Sir,

It is now four or five weeks since I sent you a Bible which I did not doubt but you would approve of. I also added so much of Henry and Scott's commentary as have already been published by the Religious Tract Society—and which I desired you would acknowledge the receipt of. Not having received any letter I begin to fear lest they should have miscarried. Write me as soon as you receive them—I know there must be some uncertainty in your receiving letters or parcels at this season.

I received a sovereign from Mr. John Brandting, now Mayor of Newcastle, yesterday for you, for your kindness in sending him the eider-duck's eggs. They came out and are in great beauty.

Shall I lay it out for you in anything you may want which Newcastle can supply better than can be got in smaller towns? If you write give me a commission for necessaries you may want about the time of my coming. I will get them for you at the wholesale price of my grocer who is a most reputable man and has the very best articles, as Mrs. Hewitson is in the habit of buying largely for poor people by which means she gets them cheaper and a liberal discount. Such things as soap, sugar, coffee, tea, etc. Blankets or anything you cannot get of the best quality. I would bring them in my boat for you. I hope to be down the first week in June at Cullercoats: my boat is painting and will be in great force. You perhaps know we lost poor Jack Storey of cholera.

Remember me to your wife and family and believe me, very sincerely,

Your friend,  
HENRY HEWITSON.

Tell me what days Blacket sends off his boat. I would continue my letters or parcels to arrive about the time.

From Henry Hewitson to Wm. Darling, Longstone.

Seaton Burn,

May 12th, 1834.

My dear Friend,

It is long since I heard anything of you. I delayed a letter until I could send you the last commentary and I now almost fear I have not written you since your last kind present of ducks and down. I know they were excellent, and in their stomachs were some curious beetles which William Hewitson got possession of. I lost no time in making the inquiry about the £2 and inclose you a letter which I hope will enable you to recover it if it has not already been paid you.

I should like to know if your boys have turned to gardening or whether they still cling to the rocks and old haunts of the Ferns? The only thing I regret is the want of active employment for them, to brighten up their minds and bring up their talents; tell me which of your girls are at home at present and how my friend Mrs. Darling is.

I mean to bring Mrs. Hewitson to Holy Island this summer, hoping to get her to see you; tell me which of the fishermen there I must prefer to bring her to Longstone. He must be a very steady and sober man and calculated to give her confidence as she has never sailed with any but Sabown. Wm. Hewitson<sup>1</sup> is at present surveying a railroad in Derbyshire, but he writes to hope he may have the pleasure of accompanying me to see you; it will be from Holy Island. The summer is breaking forth in great luxuriance and promises to be a good fruit season in which case I will send you some apples for a Sunday pie.

Mrs. Hewitson desires her remembrance to Mrs. Darling and has often gratefully enjoyed the comfort and warmth of her eiderdown when attacked with rheumatism, as also in an accident she had in breaking her arm a few months ago. If you were on the land you would often see her but the proposal of a voyage frightens her.

Remember me most kindly to your wife and all at home and believe me,

Your sincere friend,

HENRY HEWITSON.

Seaton Burn, May 12th, 1834.

It will be noticed Mr. Hewitson inquires which of the girls are now at home. Between 1830 and 1834, there is a complete absence of information about Grace. There are people living, Mr. A. Crombie Rogers and Dr. Wilson Burn, who affirm positively that Grace went for a time to a boarding school at Spittal, near Berwick-on-Tweed, kept by a certain

<sup>1</sup> "In 1838, Wm. Hewitson was employed in a survey for the railway between Bristol and Exeter. The landowners in those days were bitterly opposed to the railways; they employed watchers to keep the surveyors off their land but the intruders engaged other watchers to go round to the neighbouring public-houses to find out the hours when the landlord's watchers took refreshment and took advantage of their absence. Much of the work was done by torch-light." *History of the Natural History Society*, by T. Russell Goddard.

Bessie Crawford, a sweet gentle little woman ; the school was of good standing and frequented by the daughters of the farmers and local business men. Grace's friends, the Thompsons, went there, and Grace attended with her great friend Jane Thompson. Grace's eldest brother, William Darling, courted Jane, but was apparently too shy and retiring to win her.

The remaining members of the Darling family have no recollection of this, and are under the impression, which a letter from her seems to confirm, that her education was from her parents.

What, however, gives ground for the statements about the boarding school is the difference between Grace's writing and composition in her letters compared with those of her sisters. Her trend of thought is far more educated. She is not only reflective but is used to expressing thoughts in the hyperbole of the sentimental style of composition, then affected. Whereas her sisters' letters are in the plainest and most commonplace vernacular, spelt so badly as to be sometimes almost unreadable and without any trace of set composition. Thomasin and her brothers' letters improve in later years, but to the end there is no trace of a thought trained in some sort of literary style. Grace undoubtedly had been.

It would have been quite possible for Thomasin or Betsey to have come home for a time while Grace was away at school.

There is also no doubt that Grace was very fond of reading ; that she enjoyed and possessed volumes by most of the popular poets of the period ; and that she herself tried her hand at least once in very bad verses. Thomasin, Mary Ann, and Betsey went out into the world to earn their livings. Grace did not. She was, so the family say, noted for proficiency in any subject, but she was different from the others—fond of reading ; fond of poetry ; serious. It would not be remarkable if her parents allowed her to go with her friends to a school kept by Bessie Crawford whom they knew well, and all her family. Grace was going to be the daughter who would stay at home and her father well knew happiness in that loneliness depended in no small measure on a well-furnished mind.

From a study of the letters of the family, one is inclined to favour the possibility of Grace's boarding school experience.

## CHAPTER ELEVEN

### GRACE ATTENDS TO THE LIGHTS

MR. HEWITSON's letter may have prompted Mr. Darling to place George Alexander definitely in a trade, for we hear of his apprenticeship in Newcastle, a month after.

" June 1834. G. A. Darling went to Messrs. Hopper on trial.

July 22. Went to Newcastle in our own boat, stopped at Cresswell

all night, and got to Newcastle next day after calling at Coquet, Cullercoats and Hartley.

July 24. George bound to Mr. Hopper.

July 25. Returned home with William Brooks, calling at Shields and Newbiggin."

Childish days were over now for all ; the twins were separated ; George Alexander had joined his brothers on the mainland and William Brooks was brought back to assist and succeed his father as light-keeper. Grace was now nineteen, her place was also settled. She was to be the daughter whose lot was to take care of her parents, to which was added the duties of assistant light-keeper until her little brother, William Brooks, was old enough to attend to them. But even then, Grace sometimes had to lend a hand. Job had died three years ago when he was twenty : Robert was with a mason at Belford ; Mary Ann had married George Dixon Carr, November 18th, 1832, and lived at Bamburgh where Thomasin was a dressmaker ; Betsey was soon to marry Mr. Maule, a draper in North Sunderland. The eldest son, William, was now married and at Alnwick.

Alan Stevenson's Regulations give a good idea of Grace's duties. Light-keeping is largely a matter of cleanliness, and when oil lamps with metal reflectors were in use, the work was very heavy.

#### RULE IV.

##### First Department.

The light-keeper who has this department shall, immediately after the morning watch, polish or otherwise cleanse the reflectors or refractors till they are brought to a proper state of brilliancy ; he shall also thoroughly cleanse the lamps, and carefully dust the chandelier. He shall supply the burners with cotton, the lamps with oil, and shall have everything connected with the apparatus in a state of readiness for lighting in the evening.

#### RULE V.

##### Second Department.

The light-keeper who has this department shall cleanse the glass of the lantern, lamp-glasses, copper and brass work and utensils, the walls, floors, and balcony of the light room and the apparatus and machinery therewith connected ; together with the tower stairs, passage doors, and windows, from the light-room to the oil cellar. (Possibly Grace was the " Second Department.")

The principal light-keeper is also held responsible for the good order and condition of the household furniture belonging to the Lighthouse Board, as well as his own as in the Assistant's house. This duty extends also to the cleanliness of the several apartments, passages, stairs, roofs, water cisterns, store-rooms, workshops, privies, ash-pits of the dwelling houses, offices, court, and immediate access to the lighthouse.

## RULE XXVIII.

The light-keepers are required to be sober and industrious, cleanly in their persons and linens, and orderly in their families.

No one seems to have realized what was coming on to Grace's youthful shoulders, as her brothers and sisters left the lighthouse for the Main. Her mother might and did take on the household duties of the lighter kind, but a certain amount of cleaning lamps and reflectors and keeping all the metal work and paint in spotless condition, undoubtedly fell to Grace.

In the Victorian era women were supposed as weaker vessels, to be sheltered by the men : household work was considered to be light and more of a pastime than work : an agreeable and non-exacting occupation. When circumstances forced the women of the family into sharing the men's duties—on farms—in business—or in this case, in a lighthouse—there was a tacit hypocritical conspiracy which ignored the fact. It would have horrified Trinity and her father alike if Grace had suggested she should be put upon the pay list as assistant. So she did the work under the cover of "helping her parents."

As a loving sister, to her fell also the duties of helping her mother repair her brothers' clothes, sent home periodically for the purpose, and making their shirts, until they married. George Alexander was the last to remain single. To the end of her life Grace found herself "very throng" with her brothers' shirts. Shirts, for day or night wear, were a big undertaking in those days. The grand-daughters of Mr. Smeddle (the agent for the Crewe Trustees) still preserve a nightshirt, spun, woven, and sewn for him by the little boarders in Bamburgh Castle. The quality of the linen, as fine as it is strong, remains perfect for all its century of wear and tear. There are double facings for back and shoulder and the fronts. The stitches of the seaming are so fine as to be invisible, the microscopic oversewing of the fronts, in its regularity, would put machine stitching to shame, and the buttonholes could not be torn by the machines of a steam laundry.

But Grace's chief business was to attend to the comfort of the men of the family. She might help them in the garden, for the garden was, in a way, a housekeeper's concern. She might even help with the fishing nets, and most certainly with the curing of the fish. Living in such an unusual location, the duties of the woman at home had to include traffic with the sea, and as good a knowledge of its wiles and tactics as the men of the family, or how could she lend a hand with the boat in the daily to-and-fro ? Polishing the lamps, attending to the lights, was in line with the care of the household oil lamps. Although feminine duties dovetailed into those of the men of the family, the difference between the work pertaining to the girls and to the boys was as clearly defined as in the best regulated family inland. Grace and her sisters remained essentially feminine, according to the strictest Victorian concept of the word. Mary Ann, a wife, Thomasin, a dressmaker, Betsey (Elizabeth Grace), a maidservant ; the boys were to be light-keepers, carpenters and masons.

Salvage, fishing, the sale of the herrings, aid to the wrecks, and the responsibilities of the light were the men's affairs. It was only that life on the Longstone entailed a thorough knowledge of seafaring, and even oarsmanship, for the execution of feminine duties about the home, which forced Grace into unfeminine knowledge and accomplishment.

She herself joined wholeheartedly in the conventional conspiracy of ignoring or denying departure from the feminine. She was particular, and obviously quite sincere, in assuring people she had nothing to do with her father's and brothers' business of going out to wrecks. But in one letter while she emphatically refutes the suggestion that she is used to going out in rough weather, she naively mentions that she never takes part in her mankind's business, "unless a third hand is wanted, when I may be called upon again." It horrified her when people referred to her taking the initiative in going to the *Forfarshire* and letter after letter defends her father passionately from the suggestion that she in any way took the lead, although William Darling frankly recounted the fact.

By dint of affirming and defending what people in these days felt *should* be, they most certainly believed it really was! Grace was gentle, modest, devoted to her parents and her family and therefore feminine: their darling child and sister, protected, sheltered, never overworked, never overlaid with responsibilities. Grace, her parents and her family, to the end of their days would have taken their Bible oath to this.

In spite of the occasion now to be related when Grace's quick vision was undoubtedly the cause of saving James Logan's life, her father always stated that Grace had never helped in any life-saving before her famous deed, and as will be seen, never dreamed of chronicling her part in the adventure of the *Autumn*, when the Darlings' heroism was recorded in the newspapers, four years before Grace's deed set the whole world ringing with her name.

Christmas of 1834 as usual saw a family reunion at the lighthouse. William was back for a few days, Robert came over from Belford and George Alexander had his first holiday and returned from Newcastle to spend Christmas with his family. William was twenty-eight, Robert twenty, and George Alexander, fifteen.

At 8 p.m. the day after Boxing Day, Grace was up and about her duties in the lantern when she saw, and reported to her father, a figure on the distant Knavestone Rock.

William Darling enters the following in his *Journal* :

"1834. Decr. 27. Wind S. by E. fresh gale. 11 p.m., the sloop *Autumn*, of and to Peterhead, with coals from Sunderland, struck east point of Knavestone and immediately sank. Crew of three men; two lost, one saved by the light-keeper and three sons, viz., William, Robert and George, after a struggle of three hours. Having lost two oars on the rock, had a very narrow escape.

"P.S. The man saved, James Logan, stood near ten hours, part on the rock, part on the masthead; the mate lying dead beside him on the rock the last three hours, having perished from cold."

The points worth notice here, are :

- (1) William Darling mentions the names of his sons.
- (2) He indicates the dangers overcome, the three hours' severe struggle, the loss of the oars, the very narrow escape.
- (3) This is the first entry in the *Journal* which makes a rescue of any personal interest ; up till now, he invariably enters " crew saved."

But it was Grace who discovered life on the rock, even as she did four years later !

Her brother, George Alexander, gave an account of her part in it, in his statement printed in William Darling's *Journal* when it was published in 1886. At this date, George Alexander was sixty-seven, living at North Sunderland, and pursuing his trade of a ship's carpenter. His memory of what occurred when he was a boy of fifteen can be taken to be correct : the circumstances made a great stir at the time, and were again brought into prominence and well publicized four years later when Grace won fame.

Here is George's story :

" When the *Autumn* struck on the night of the 27th of December, the Knavestone, which the sea covers at half, or from that to three-quarters tide, was still nearly under water, although the tide fell. The vessel listed towards the rock, sank, and the Master with her. The mate, and the man Logan, first ascended to the topmast which stood out above the water, and from thence they eventually scrambled on the rock ; but the mate died under exposure and was washed into a crevice by the returning tide. Logan remained alone, the tide rising.

" About eight o'clock on the morning of the 28th, Grace Darling, ere long to become the heroine of the Farne Islands, and then in her twentieth year, discerned him from the lantern of the Longstone. Her father had gone to rest for an hour or two, leaving Grace to put out the lights. She immediately roused him ; and in the same boat in which he afterwards rowed with his daughter to the *Forfarshire*, he and his said three sons got to the Knavestone.

" Even in fine weather there are strong currents and a tossing sea about it ; and with a high flowing tide and a strong gale blowing, the risk run is apparent enough. There was no time to be lost. To attempt landing was out of the question. The Darlings tried to float a spar, with a rope attached, to Logan ; but his condition had become frantic, and this was useless. Not much wonder, for when the boat was taken as near to him as it could be (dangerously near the rock) he stood up to his armpits in the tide. He gave such a leap " (George Darling writes) " I shall never forget, and lay in the boat exhausted and silent. It was then the two oars broke in the attempt to get away. Robert and George, the only two who could swim, had to quit the boat and help her off the rock. It was, even for them, imminent risk in such a sea, but they did it. It was a miracle that the boat was not destroyed, when all five must have perished.

" Under a close reefed sail, and taking a roundabout course, as they were by the gale compelled to do, at length they regained the Longstone



lighthouse. It was not until Logan had been seven or eight hours in bed, that he spoke for the first time after his rescue, and it was then only that particulars of the Mate's and Master's fate became known. Their bodies were never recovered. Logan stated that the Master having his large boots on, they filled with water and prevented his escape to the topmast along with the other two."

To Grace's biographers, who were hard put to it for any indication of romance such as should appertain to a heroine, the rescue of James Logan was a godsend, and a marvellous concoction of sentimental surmises was accordingly entwined about the stark nudity of Grace's common sense career. But the Darlings never heard from James Logan again. He was merely one more of those they aided who went on their way.

Four years were to pass before the Great Adventure came, and Grace received her due.

## CHAPTER TWELVE

### "MEN MUST WORK . . ."

BEFORE the full blaze of the limelight is turned upon the great adventure which placed Grace Darling definitely, and for all time, in the roll-call of famous Victorian women, let us look round on the women of her time.

Florence Nightingale was starting her career of bringing efficiency into the profession of nursing.

But those early years of hers were by no means favourably considered. What was her chief desire?

To leave home.

To repudiate her daughterly duties to father, mother and family.

Many many years later the vision of a ministering angel was to capture the imagination of the public, but Florence Nightingale was sailing against the wind for a long time before she got out on to the high seas.

Josephine Butler was being execrated on every side for daring to feel compassion and claim humane treatment for what were known as "the fallen."

Charlotte Brontë, born the same year as Grace, was incurring the strictures of *The Times* for her indelicacy and immodesty in *Jane Eyre*. She and her sisters were of the shrieking sisterhood. They clamoured about woman's grievance; "that she should be left there, unwooed, unloved, out of reach of the natural openings of life; without hope of motherhood, with the great instinct of her being unfulfilled, was almost a philosophic grievance felt by her for her kind," says Mrs. Oliphant.

But popular opinion considered Charlotte and Emily Brontë shamefully unsexed. Their books might be admired; but *Shirley* and *Caroline Helstone* clamoured for the right to find a mate. Then, in Grace Darling's day, Mrs. Norton (second daughter of Richard Brinsley

Sheridan), was enduring terrific hardship in her struggles for matrimonial justice. Public attention was drawn to her, for was she not a poet and novelist? In 1836, Mr. Norton was seeking a divorce and though Mrs. Norton was able to clear herself of all the charges brought against her, the husband was able to gain possession of her children, and she was only allowed to see them for half an hour each year. He took the money she gained by her literary labours, no small amount for she made as much as £1,400 a year.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century other women besides Mrs. Norton were being very active, and very successful too, as novelists. Women were becoming independent. Money was streaming in to the women of a family in return for those women's own exertions, direct from the world of business and barter, success and fame. Money was beginning its harshest rule in the rising epoch of industrialism. The Early Victorian public wanted some part of the community to remain unspoiled. They felt the correct womanly attitude towards money should be a delicate repulsion to filthy lucre, and desired the maiden dear to the poet's heart to shrink from it; she should want no money of her own beyond a frugal allowance, for whether daughter or wife the ideal Victorian heroine was always of simple tastes. As will be seen, Grace perfectly complied with this ideal, and what a contrast was Grace Darling to the pioneers who were examining "duty" in an entirely new light, and placing their duty to themselves a long way ahead, so that they might fulfil what they considered to be their duty to humanity; their duty to their families and parents, though engaged in by dint of habit, did not come into what they and posterity are pleased to call their life work at all.

There was Jane Austen poking sly little digs at children and parents and families. There was George Eliot very busy about the rights of wives, and in some cases of husbands too; very deep indeed in such themes as duty to one's soul; but with an uncomfortable way of sweeping aside duties of daughters to their menkind, as being almost too trivial to notice. There was Mary Garth, of course, in *Middlemarch*, but though Mary had a wonderful father in Caleb Garth, she was by no means an uncritical daughter, and Mary's shrewd bright eyes saw most uncomprisingly through her brothers' and her lover's weaknesses.

It was the day of the Maiden, the Virgin, not seeking a lover, sheltering rather behind a bodyguard of the men of her family who maintained her in inviolate seclusion, a rosebud with the petals scarcely visible, shrouded, fresh and dewy, beneath clustering leaves. A rosebud with no desire for the wooing of the sun or the dusty glare of the world beyond the rosebush; giving out divine sweetness, devoted to the good of all, and most of all her rosebush home.

Another circumstance was having a very strong influence on public sentiment; Victoria had just come to the throne, and for the first years of the young Queen's reign the papers show that a young girl in so exalted a position, had suddenly focused attention on the maiden. Sympathetic and sentimental allusions pervade the Press. Think of

it ! Fresh, ardent, serious, a child desirous only of fulfilling her duties. Goodness and youth enthroned, after the Four Georges ! The change was stupendous. Victoria ascending to her throne in 1837, Victoria crowned the following year, 1838 (the year of the wreck of the *Forfarshire*). The maiden queen (not to be married until 1841), absolutely heartwhole in her devotion to her people, the idol of a community brought up on Dickens' and Thackeray's white muslin innocents. A virgin Queen, fair-complexioned and golden-haired : unsullied, pure, her life dedicated to the service of all, her heart aflame with desire for the country's good : compassionate and kind.

Men must work, but it was unhesitatingly felt that women must weep. The heart of a woman found its natural outlet in streams of tears when pity moved it. The young Queen pitied people.

Remember, these were the days of the first flood of humanitarianism. People were waking from the cynicism of the eighteenth century with its cruelty and indifference to the sufferings of the toilers. In 1838, *Oliver Twist* appeared. Everywhere compassion was becoming widespread. People were realizing the horrors and injustice and cruelty which had been accepted as the natural customs of existence, and instinctively they looked to women for kindness and gentleness and pity.

Grace Darling's deed, Grace Darling's tenderness and charity towards the survivors she had rescued, came at the exact moment when people were in the mood for it.

And there is the secret of history, as well as of publicity.

Before the story of Grace Darling's claim on history is recited, it is all important to realize the pervading mood of her times.

**PART TWO**  
**HER DEED**

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

### 'FORFARSHIRE':

CAPTAIN JOHN HUMBLE  
JAMES DUNCAN, First Mate  
ALAN STEWART, Engineer  
JOHN TULLOCH, Carpenter } of the *Forfarshire* crew.  
JONATHAN TICKETT, Cook  
JOHN KIDD, Fireman  
JOHN NICHOLSON  
WILLIAM DOUTHY  
JOHN MACQUEEN, Coal Trimmer }  
MR. RITCHIE OF RUTHVEN  
DANIEL DONOVAN, Fireman  
JAMES KELLY, Weaver } Passengers.  
THOMAS BUCHANAN, Baker  
MRS. DAWSON  
THE REV. ROBB

### NORTH SUNDERLAND:

WILLIAM ROBSON  
JAMES ROBSON  
MICHAEL ROBSON } North Sunderland Lifeboat crew.  
THOMAS CUTHBERTSON  
WILLIAM SWANN  
ROBERT KNOX

### BAMBURGH:

BARTHOLOMEW YOUNGHUSBAND, Lloyd's Agent for Bamburgh.  
JAMES SINCLAIR, Subagent of Lloyd's, under Dunbar (Berwick).  
JORDAN EVANS, Customs Officer, Bamburgh.  
HUGH ROSS.  
A. F. RUSSELL (Coroner).  
STEPHEN REED (Deputy Coroner).  
WILLIAM TAYLOR.

### DUNDEE:

MR. JUST, Manager of the London and Dundee Shipping Co.  
MR. BOYD, Director.  
MR. LAIRD.  
MR. ALLINSON.  
ROBERT MATTHEWSON.  
MR. BORRIE.

## CHAPTER THIRTEEN

### THE WRECK OF THE *FORFARSHIRE*

ON Thursday, September 7th, 1838, Grace was at the Longstone lighthouse with her parents. The herring fishing was in full swing and her youngest brother, William Brooks, a lad of eighteen, had gone over to Seahouses, the harbour of the fishing village of North Sunderland, some five miles away. The rest of the light-keeper's family were earning their bread upon the mainland, and when Brooks went off to lend a hand to William Swan and other of his fishermen friends, Grace had to take on the duties of assistant light-keeper. Grace was now twenty-two, five feet three in height, with golden-brown hair, the colour of wet seaweed with the sun through it; her clearly marked dark eyebrows over her beautiful mild eyes and oddly determined chin beneath lips the colour and shape of a folded rosebud, gave character to her sweet expression. She was slight and delicately built, though her small wrists were used to pulling the full weight of the oars. Life on the bare rock of the Longstone with garden and domestic animals on an adjoining island, made the light-keeper's family early acquainted with handling their fishing coble.

It was the time of the equinoctial tides and a strong wind from the south-south-east was blowing. All through Thursday the sea raged with phenomenal violence and the tide was exceptionally high. A thick mist overcast the sea and the signal-gun from Bamburgh Castle sent its melancholy boom across the waters through the day. It was far too rough to go out in the coble. The goats on the Brownsman must remain un milked, and there was no chance of Brooks returning in such a sea. Out there in the massive lighthouse, the breakers dashing clear across the fragment of black rock, William Darling foresaw the night might bring hard work. Each tide was higher than the last, and if the wind changed, their courtyard might be invaded, the wall shattered, and their possessions swept away.

During that melancholy Thursday the Darlings' own affairs took up much thought; Brooks would be missed when it came to fighting with the tide; and the lantern must be alertly tended. On such a night a bird might be blown against, and break the glass. The tossing ships in those wild seas came urgently, and tragically, before the Darlings. Sea, wind, tide and the oppressive mist, made bad conditions round the Farnes.

One may be sure Grace said her prayers earnestly that night as she

went to bed in her room immediately beneath the service room, whose window was some eighty feet above the welter of the inky sea. Through the darkness, the oil lamps shone out on to the high cliffs of the Harkers, stretching like a line of jagged teeth to the west. Above her head, her father took his watch. One can see her brushing her long hair by the pale flame of her home-made candle, twisting up the ringlets that fell on either side of her face into their wet rags, or curl-papers; plaiting the long tresses that formed a coronal by day and covering all with a neat nightcap. The little white room was very orderly. From a peg, depended her gown of thin gingham, striped in green and white, for although the weather had turned bitterly cold, it was early September and the girls of those days were strictly seasonal in their attire. There it hung, with its double sleeves and deep cape collar, with her folded petticoats and homespun underlinen in a bulky pile on the chair beside it.

Out went the candle, but the Argand Lights revolved steadily above, the flashes coming regularly into the little room, a girl's room with Grace's case of sea-birds' eggs, and her collection of sea-shells, and her Bible and few books and fewer trinkets—and there she slept in peaceful safety as a sea-bird sleeps upon its crag throughout the storm.

Water hanging heavy in the weighted air; water alive, upheaved, and foaming in the seas; water tearing through the passages between the reefs and turning them to boiling cauldrons; water which man was challenging and taming to his service, so that this conquered force might drive his vessels through the element in its wildest fury.

1838 saw the beginning of transit by steam. The first steamboat crossed the Atlantic; and the *Forfarshire*, queen of coastal steamers, was running regularly between Dundee and Hull, past the dread islands of the Farnes.

Not only were the coastal seas our highway in those days; our rivers and canals afforded the chief means of communication between the great industrial centres. Sheffield, Leeds, Nottingham, Manchester, Liverpool, were all connected with the Humber, if not directly, by easy land access. And in like manner, the Tay served the North of Scotland. Roads were bad; the North was only being surveyed for railways.

The *Forfarshire* had been launched in 1834 amidst immense enthusiasm, to unite the commerce of the Tay and Humber. Perishable goods now might be exchanged; flax imported from France and Hamburg via Hull, for Scottish factories. Steam was to carry the goods with marvellous rapidity—eight or nine knots an hour; a voyage was no longer dependent upon weather. The *Forfarshire* was the pride of the fine old shipping firm, the Dundee, Perth and London Company. Dundee ecstasised on the quality of the materials and workmanship, her poop deck, her breadth over the paddle wheels (40½ feet) and between them (22½ feet), and her two engines of the power of 90 horses, which,

combined, could work up to that of 190 horses. "This great propulsive force" being "as high, if not higher than that of any steamer of the size now afloat." And then there were the saloon and cabins, where "everything is to be done that expense and ingenuity can devise to make them splendid and convenient." There was a ladies' cabin, and one for gentlemen; private state-rooms; marble mantelpieces; gilt-scrrolled service trays and china, each with a picture of the *Forfarshire* adorning it.

The day of the luxury steamer had dawned. The panels of the saloons were by a well-known artist, Horatio McCulloch; the mantelpieces were of marble. Every item of the equipment was a subject of great cogitation by the Board. They recommended the crystal should be "plain and strong and heavy for undergoing fatigue." They debated between solid table silver and Berlin silver. A Liverpool steamer had had solid silver, but most of it had been stolen, so Berlin silver carried the day. For the first time, the idea of a pleasure cruise was being ventilated. This new passenger service was to make Dundee a starting place for tourists visiting Scotland. The sailing bills make a special feature of the cabins being "airy, commodious and elegant." They also stressed the excellent accommodation "for horses, livestock, carriages, etc."; mentioned the "number of excellent conveyances" going from Dundee in all directions to "the most interesting parts of the justly celebrated Highland scenery," set out pleasure tours, and profited so well that in 1835 an order for another steamer to cost £22,000 was placed.

While there may have been a certain timidity among the steerage passengers who did not enjoy the refinements of the cabins, and were perhaps more superstitious as regards the remarkable inventions that purported to conquer tide and wind, the well-to-do flocked eagerly to the luxurious surroundings, which suggested their own drawing-rooms and gave a wonderful sense of safety and ease, almost, if not entirely, shutting out the perils of the deep.

Steamboats and pleasure excursions were indeed inseparably connected in the public mind. From the trips to Gravesend, Greenwich and the Hoy, which Mr. Dickens was describing so amusingly, these extensive trips were now developing; not in small boats packed with the lower classes, but in vessels where the steerage accommodated the lowly and elegant cabins and state-rooms were provided for the elite.

The *Forfarshire* set out in the height of the Scottish season, with its load of tourists and Scots returning home, to whose relatives and friends the voyage was a keen source of interest. To travel in the *Forfarshire* was a hallmark of sophistication. The roughness, the austerity, the dangers of the old-time sailing vessel, were to be no more.

Unfortunately, however, although the passengers and plates alike might rejoice in impressions of the steamers in the gayest hues, the ocean on the north-east coast remained its formidable self.

Nor had the first experimenters in steel and iron discovered entirely how to circumvent the ceaseless attack of the gigantic forces of the deep.



A problem that had not been solved was the riveting of the boilers. The Bessemer process for making steel had been discovered in 1772, but steel was not in general use. It was considered, indeed, very uncertain, and iron boiler plates were still used. Now steel can stand a pressure of fifty tons, but iron only fifteen tons to the square inch. The iron boiler-plates of 1838 were riveted by hand; the rivets were some distance apart, and could only resist a pull of fifteen tons. If through constant use the plates became encrusted within, and the water did not actually come in contact with the metal to cool it, the iron would burn through and thus a three-quarter inch rivet would find itself in only half an inch, perhaps, of iron. It would work backwards and forwards between the plates and leakage would inevitably result.

There were no weather forecasts in those days. The *Forfarshire*, with its cushioned chairs, its gilded trays, its elaborate refreshments, and a full load of passengers, set out to meet the worst storm ever known on one of the bleakest and most dangerous of our coasts, with the newly discovered power of steam in the infancy of its development.

Captain John Humble saw no cause for uneasiness until about 4 a.m. on Thursday, when the starboard boiler was discovered to be leaking. He could then have easily put in to Shields or returned to Hull. But the *Forfarshire* was famed for her speed and dependability; he had a heavy cargo and twenty cabin passengers of some consequence; he was now at Flamborough Head and decided to push on. Both deck pumps were working, but they could not keep the water in the leaking boiler, and two of the furnaces had to be drawn out lest the draughts should interfere with the other fires. As the day wore on, the violence of the squalls increased and the furnaces were relighted, both deck and engine pumps being kept going to deal with the boiling water now leaking till it filled the bilge.

The hatches had to be kept open to get rid of the steam which made the firemen's work most difficult. At 8 p.m. when the vessel was off Berwick the wind backed north-north-east and rose to gale force. The leak in the boiler began to increase and the deck pumps were unable to clear the boiling water. At every roll, great waves of the hot water were dashed against the firemen so that they could not get near the furnaces. She was now off St. Abb's Head. At 1 a.m. on the Friday, the engine stopped completely.

Rain was falling in torrents so that all the passengers kept below and knew nothing of their peril. The fore and aft sails were now set to draw the doomed vessel off the land, but the wind was tremendous, blowing her to leeward, and she refused the guidance of her helm. Steam had turned the hold into a scalding hell and now denied them the propulsive power on which they had depended.

The vessel was drifting south and the captain decided to try and make the Fairway and seek shelter in the lee of the islands where there was a basin of sheltered water. They had passed the stationary Berwick Light and he kept a lookout for the revolving light upon the Inner Farne. Visibility was poor, but presently he caught its gleam through

the mist. The wind and rain were still of unparalleled fury, with the huge black rollers sweeping in from the North Sea, but once they gained the Fairway . . .

Strange that they were now so near the Light they should be well to leeward, and yet the wind had not decreased. . . .

The wind was keeping other folk awake. Shortly after midnight Grace's sleep was broken by a tap upon her door. Her father stood there in his pilot coat and sealskin cap tied about his ears, with the news that the wind was now due north and at four that morning they would have the highest tide they had ever known. Grace must come at once and help him lash the coble to its supports, for the sea would be right into the open boat-house. Everything in the courtyard must be made firm, or brought into the kitchen. There was not a moment to lose. Already the tide had nearly gained the steps.

Grace got into her clothes with the speed of one used to similar emergencies. One never knew when a call might come for instant action in this strange home, forever amidst the onslaught of the sea. She probably covered herself with a shawl or cloak kept for such occasions, and as she came through the kitchen, lit by the dull embers of the evening fire, she caught up her coarse straw bonnet that hung beside the men's caps on the rail in the warm and sheltered corner by the fire, and tied it tightly over her hair, which she had twisted up into the familiar coronal; the curls remained in their rags, conveniently out of the way. This was not a night for hair to be blowing across one's eyes.

Then the door on to the storm was opened and they struggled down the steps, buffeted by the wind and drenched immediately by the blinding rain. There was, indeed, no time to spare. First, the coble, out beyond the wall, to be lashed tight to the iron stanchions and the winch above it, the oars secured; the great rudder which dipped beneath the keel and kept the frail craft steady.

Into the courtyard, to carry in the stepladder, the clothes-line, the washing basket; the rabbits and their hutch; the nets; the garden implements. . . .

They could take no moment's rest and it was heavy work for Grace, especially beyond the walls, where the spray was making the slippery basalt more precarious than ever, and the incoming tide threatened to sweep them off their feet. High tide was at 4.13 a.m. and they got back to the kitchen, sopping wet and tired. Mr. Darling apparently was taking the last watch in the lantern. It would be dawn shortly before six, when the lights could be extinguished. Grace must have gone straight up to her bedroom, leaving her wet cloak to dry before the kitchen fire, while her father turned into the room he occupied with Mrs. Darling, and there fell instantly asleep.

What a sense of shelter the inmates of the lighthouse felt when they gained the warmth within its mighty walls—so thick that the roar of

the gale was scarcely heard. Only in the lantern with its hollow roof, was gathered up the crashing noise of water, wind and rock, combined in battle.

Between three and four o'clock Grace climbed the lantern stair.

Between three and four o'clock Captain Humble conceived himself to have gained the Fairway, near the shelter of the Inner Farne, whose light winked fitfully through the mist and rain; and gave orders to have the anchors ready. Almost in the next breath he exclaimed: "My God, we are all lost."

The breakers on the Harkers were leaping round the *Forfarshire*. All sails were set. They put the vessel's head about, but before they could get her round they beheld white clouds of foam rolling over the great cliffs in billows mountain-high.

There was no time to call the passengers; no time to get them in the boats. The Captain shouted down the companion, but only those beside the stairway heard him. One young gentleman alone leapt from his berth, snatched his pantaloons into his arms, and rushed on deck. Before he gained it the vessel crashed upon the rock. He ran to the forepart of the vessel where the crew were getting out the starboard quarter boat, and jumped into her. As the crew lowered her, the vessel heaved and the mate, seeing she was doomed and hoping to pick up survivors if they could keep to the leeward of the island, swung himself over the quarter by the tackle and was taken into her. He got aboard to find they had two oars. Before these could be used the whirling current carried them away. As they went they saw the great hulk rise into the air and strike again upon the rock. The third sea split her in two, close by the paddles; most of the cabin passengers now aroused were on deck, ladies and children were rushing from the ladies' cabin and state-rooms; lairds, half-clothed tourists, merchants, crowded the companion stair. With grim irony, the sea gathered to itself the luxurious equipment; the fashionable and prosperous; and the whole of the cabin passengers went with the riven deck into the raging abyss—and eternity.

One woman and her two children, a baker, a weaver, a clergyman, all steerage passengers, and a fireman, who had been given a free passage, the ship's carpenter and five of the crew were left. The Captain had been washed overboard, his wife clasped in his arms.

The tide was rising and it was only by rigidly attaching themselves to the wreck that they were able to resist the seas which broke over the paddle-wheels and deck and foamed amidst the broken sails and rigging. The deluge of rain was nothing to the weight of the sheets of water which passed over them. One poor creature refused to come on deck, and huddled in the forecabin until he was drowned in his prison house. The minister sat near the engine-house where every breaker brought from him a heavy sob until his strength gave way and he breathed no more.

As the wan light dawned they saw the tide was ebbing and clambered down on to the rock. The Great Harker slopes in a gentle declivity towards the south (in this wind, the leese side) and they hoped for shelter.

The survivors did not know of the double tide ; in two hours' time, to their horror, the waves began to break again over the weather side and again crash down on them, buffeting them until their clothes were literally torn from them.

Hope had gone when due south of the lighthouse that reared its tower so mockingly three hundred yards away, they saw a small coble coming towards them, pulled by two figures amidships, each grasping an oar.

Suddenly, with tears of joy and amazement streaming down his face, one of the sailors, an old man who had seen many marvels but never one to equal this, cried aloud : " For the Lord's sake, there's a lassie coming ! "

## CHAPTER FOURTEEN

### THE RESCUE

A NIGHT when the furies round the Farnes were howling loud ! When one stepped into the lantern, one entered a dome of noise, resounding with the screaming of the wind, the clash and crepitation of the waves, the drumming of the rain upon the panes, a clanging uproar, booming, blaring, with perpetual salvos, wild alarums, reverberating until the ear was deafened and the senses stunned.

Here was the apex of the storm, and one stood within it, safe and dry and warm, in the heart of the blinding radiance of the reflectors and the lights. But outside, beyond the glass . . . where air and water raged, what chance had any craft afloat to-night ?

How much more sheltered—even peaceful—was Grace's room where the noise ceased. She entered a haven after the awful strain and struggle of the night.

What prompted her to look out into that void of darkness, all the darker for the pale gleam of the frothing waters ? Tired as she was, it would have been natural for her to shed her drenched clothes and slip into bed.<sup>1</sup> But Grace went to her window and looked out. There was something unfamiliar ; a great mass rising from the Harkers ; a huge promontory with shafts that pierced the spray ! A wreck ! A great wreck !

It was a quarter to five.

Something must be done. Her father had turned in ; she must not leave this terrible calamity unnoticed. She opened her door again and hurried up the winding staircase to the lantern where her mother was taking the last watch. The lights would need little attention in the

<sup>1</sup> That Grace saw the wreck from her bedroom window is given on the authority of Mr. James Davis, light-keeper at the Longstone, who was with Grace Darling's nephews for twenty years.

hour before dawn. Thomasin Darling was used to sitting by the fire with her spinning, and keeping her grip on the household reins tightly enough from that quarter, with her active family to do her bidding. Devoted to her husband, she left the rough work of the sea to him and pursued her quiet domesticities, unruffled. But she was someone to consult, someone to seek in this appalling time, and Grace went to her mother.

Overwrought by the night's work and the weight of the responsibility cast on her by Brook's absence, Grace was strung to the uttermost tension; the gigantic size of the vessel, compared to the sloops and schooners and smacks they were used to, unnerved her further. Mrs. Darling had one thought: the comfort and the care of her husband. But William Darling had absolutely no care for himself. With Grace, he was possessed of one idea: their duty to those who passed the Farnes. Her mother could not keep Grace from rousing him and he needed no more than a word. His post was in the lantern with his telescope. Was there life on the wreck?

"One quarter before five," he wrote to Trinity, "My Daughter observed a Vessel on the Harkers rock, but owing to the Darkness and spray going over her, could not observe any person on the Wreck, although the glass was incessantly applied until near seven o'clock."

Two hours! After being out and about since shortly after midnight! Two hours' incessant strain of vision bent upon that dark hulk, which became clearer as the dawn broke and defined the terrible thrust of the deck from which the paddle-wheels rose in tragic incapacity.

When full daylight came it will be remembered the survivors from crew and steerage clambered down upon the rock. At seven, the Darlings perceived something moving: they judged that three or four sought refuge on the reef. But the Darlings knew the double tide was rising; the spray already was beginning to show over the weather side. Rain, wind and wave had in no way abated. The dim light only made the scene more awful.

Three hundred yards away from comfort, food, fire, kindness, home. Only three hundred yards away; with the coble within reach that Grace and her brothers and father had rowed a thousand times, much longer distances. How could one stand in safety with one's fellow creatures suffering the horror of the cold and fury, watching death come to them? Stand and see them washed into that hell of waters?

"I had little thought of anything but to exert myself to the utmost, my spirit was worked up by the sight of such a dreadful affair that I can imagine I still see the sea flying over the vessel," wrote Grace, later.

It seemed to her the most natural and simple duty to take the coble and go out to those people and bring them into the lighthouse.

It seemed to her father, looking at that raging sea, the most desperate and hopeless of adventures. But he was always ready to put on his considering cap.

"... It was sufficient to affect the strongest nerve to view the wreck. I was very anxious, and did render every assistance that lay

in my power, but my father was equally so and needed not to be urged by me, being experienced in such things and knowing what could be done," wrote Grace.

William Darling knew that it was absolutely impossible to take the coble out into the full force of the gale, and round the lighthouse on the direct course to the Harkers. The only possible chance was to let her drift with the wind southward to the left for some distance, till they could gain the shelter of the Blue Caps and bring her up under the lee of these rocks and the Harker reef. The tide would be in their favour. But on returning, the coble would have to be rowed against both tide and gale. It took three men to manage her in rough weather. Grace was a slight girl. Grace said her father needed no urging, but William Darling told William Howitt in 1841, that she declared "that if he declined to accompany her, she would go alone, and that live or die, she would make the attempt to save them."

To the end of her life, Grace could never see her action as heroic. She was the third generation of a family of light-keepers whose duty was to keep watch out there, surrounded by circumstances dangerous to others, but of no peril to themselves. Before William Darling left the service, he and his father and his sons had rescued hundreds from wrecks upon the Farnes, without any injury whatever to themselves. The kitchens at the Brownsman and Longstone had welcomed innumerable sea-battered mariners : many a sailor with broken limbs or bruised almost to death, had been nursed for days, weeks, months, in their hospitable rooms nearly always at the light-keeper's expense. From earliest childhood Grace had seen the victims of the Farnes brought in from the wild ocean ; now her brothers were not at hand to help, she must take their place as inevitably as when Brooks and her father were alone and needed an extra hand to help them.

Her own safety never occurred to her any more than her possible feebleness. When did her father consider his welfare, or his need of strength ? When there was a "strong job" to do, he did it. No call for aid ever found him reluctant. How could they possibly hold back now ?

One great exertion, and they could save the forlorn creatures on that rock, and bring them into the kind shelter so ready and so near.

William Darling was not a man to spare himself. He judged it would be absolutely impossible for the lifeboat at North Sunderland to come out. Beside the terrific swell, the wind would be straight into the harbour, and against the men for a five mile course. The Bamburgh lifeboat could never be launched in the surf that would be breaking on the sands exposed to the full force of the Norther. There was only one chance for the poor creatures on the rock being rescued : and that was from him and Grace.

And there was a possibility of them obtaining help from a couple of the men they saw. With the assistance of the sailors, they might be able to make the return in safety. Grace caught at this, argued, was so positive, so desperate, so beside herself, that her father yielded.

Speed was their surpassing need. Grace's unprecedented violence swept her father, up to now unhesitatingly obeyed in his slightest gesture, forward.

The coble would have to be got out into the haven, falsely so-called this weather, with the great swell of the ocean lapping every crevice of the rock, and the rain descending as if the inundation of the world had come. Grace slipped into her room and took off all her petticoats : wove a little plaid shawl tightly about her neck, crossed it and tied it fast behind her waist, leaving her arms free : took up her cape of the same thin material as her gown<sup>1</sup> and with sudden forethought, lifted the blankets from her bed. They might be needed for any who had been hurt, or exposed with insufficient covering.

Mrs. Darling was down and getting breakfast in the kitchen : wreck or no wreck, her husband and Grace needed a good cup of coffee. But Grace and her father could not wait for food : we have it in Grace's own writing that they lost not a moment once they had observed signs of life. Again she tied her bonnet over curl-papers and all, and instead of pausing to accept Mrs. Darling's steaming coffee, they summoned her to come out with them to the coble, this old lady in her white frilled mobcap with her spectacles pushed up over the frill, in nothing but her housegown and a little shawl over her shoulders : the early morning shawl for housewear on a chilly day.

The painters who flocked to the Longstone after, have drawn the bewildered old lady steadying the coble on the landside, while Grace and her father get in and pull her off. Mrs. Darling had no sympathy for Grace, nor, at that moment, for the sufferers they went to ; as she stood trembling and weeping, her last words were : " Oh, Grace, if your father is lost, I'll blame a' you for this morning's work."

Poor old Mrs. Darling saw them disappear and then went up to the lantern to watch their progress. Looking out, she found that they had vanished. She was left alone with no one but herself to tend the light, her idolized husband gone, with Gracie. . . . Brooks unreachable . . . she might be left alone for days. . . .

Some time after she found herself upon the floor, with consciousness returning. Again she sought the tossing waste of waters, this time with the telescope, and to her joy perceived the coble on the crest of a high wave.

Mrs. Darling like all her family was very practical. Now that relief had come about her dear ones, she could and did feel kindly to those in such discomfort who would soon be needing all that she could do for them. She went down to the kitchen, banked up the fire, set on

<sup>1</sup> Letter from Miss Norraby, granddaughter of the artist Henry Perlee Parker, to whom Grace presented her complete costume. " The dress she wore on that memorable occasion was like a housemaid's dress with cape, made of green and white striped material, very thin material, and no one in these days would have worn such a frock to face the elements in, as she did. I know this is correct for I have handled the cape hundreds of times."



THE RESCUE  
By Carmichael and Parker.



THE RESCUE  
By Thos. Musgrave Joy.





her pans and pots ready to give all hot drink and food. Bedding too must be prepared. Mrs. Darling did her duty by her fellows, too.

The coble which the Darlings manned, was not the one in use to-day, needing three oars, two pulled by one or two men amidships, and the third, a longer and heavier oar, by a man in front of them. It was a four-oared coble. Grace and her father sat together amidships, each plying an oar. In this way they could keep the steadiest course, considering Grace's likelihood to pull a weaker stroke than her father. But that morning Grace was in a state of exaltation that seemed to lift her beyond human strength. She possessed the force of a fanatic ; the power which comes to delicate women in maniacal frenzy, when they are no longer conscious of physical limitations but are possessed of a driving fury wherein it takes several men to hold them. But Grace's frenzy was heaven-sent. Her shy and gentle nature was transformed : pity and compassion flooded her with dynamic emotion. She knew she must pull equal with her father's greatest effort if they were to keep an even course ; and she matched him. Both knew the slightest miscalculation or cessation of their fullest energy would cause the coble to ship a sea that would immediately sink her.

The Harkers lay three hundred yards away, but the way the Darlings went, they had to pull a mile. When they got into the lee of the Blue Caps, they had still to reckon with the tremendous swell of a sea eighteen to twenty fathoms deep : the lee of the Harkers was not a piece of ornamental water. They had to keep their eyes unblinded by the hurtling onslaught of the rain ; to pull, soaked to the skin, through the bitter cold, to grapple with and circumvent the tricky currents through the guts and over the sunken rocks that threatened to twist the frail craft broadside. They knew every rock and sounding in fair weather ; but in a tide and gale like this, the Farnes defied all human knowledge.

Larger and more formidable the towering hulk looked as they came into full sight of her. As the wave that had lifted the *Forfarshire* receded, the weight of those mighty engines Dundee had hailed with applause and cheers, had broken off the whole back part of the vessel and now the famous *Forfarshire* lay on her side, her riven cabins showing in gigantic ruin. Nearer they came, and nearer ; now the lift of the waves enabled them to see the people clinging to the rock over which the great foam clouds were descending in shattering cascades as the billows broke against the north side of the reef. But there were more alive than they had thought : there were nine, nay, more. They could see a woman holding in her arms two children, a boy and girl, eight and eleven years old, their little bodies huddled limply to her. Someone was lying on the higher rock ; others crouched in helpless submission. Some were pushing, fighting, crowding to the water's edge. And the coble could not take them all. Not more than five, with Grace and her father making seven. The woman and the children, the man lying on the rock, the figure crouched exhausted : and there was that threatening surging crowd upon the rock's edge, ready to rush the boat directly they could gain her : rush, and swamp her.

William Darling had been trained to meet emergencies : he was a man of iron will, with the quiet eye of the natural commander. There was only one thing to do. The next time the wave lifted them he must leap out and leave Grace alone to keep the coble off the rocks. To do this, she must take both oars and row backwards and forwards as rapidly as possible. Grace took this for granted, neither of them paused to consider the immense strength needed for the feat. The woman, the children, and the sick, must be taken first.

The howling mob that greeted them with tears and entreaties to hasten to their aid and take them from the seas that might each moment sweep them down, must be reasoned with and the strongest enlisted for the first return.

Afterwards, when an old man, William Darling told how the worst moment of all was when he had to leave Grace in the coble—on that sea.

Grace's marvellous endurance has most impressed the popular imagination, but what sort of a man was William Darling, to leave the daughter dearest to him of anything on earth, and meet and master those raging elements of fear, selfishness and crass brutality, far more dangerous than the elements of air and water. He did master them : and with amazing instancy.

The man on the rock he found to be the clergyman whose body the sailors had taken from the vessel, not certain then if life remained. There was no question of that now. And the children. . . .

Grace pulled the boat to meet the woman lifted by her father and the sailors ; but the children . . . two forlorn little heaps left on the rock, the mother crying with heatrending wails to be left with them. The sea had buffeted them to death as she held them : they had been dead for hours. She was wrapped in one of the blankets, almost unconscious, fortunately too weak to struggle. Another sufferer, helpless with his injuries, was lifted in. Grace could be spared now ; the ship's carpenter and two more of the crew were more than ready to lend a hand.

So they returned. William Darling gives an accurate account in a letter to a painter seeking information :

“ The boat is 16½ feet in the ram or keel, 21½ feet from stem to stern, 5 feet 4 inches amidships, gradually taken in to the cutwater forward and the same aft to 2 feet a-stern. Five seats, one of them astern. Grace sat on the midships, the woman sat upon flooring forward with her head lying against the side, as she was not fit to sit on the seats and one of the men was lying aft in the same manner with a blanket round each. The children were both left in the wreck, dead. Four oars used in pulling back, no rudder shipped. The steamer's head lay due E., our house bearing E.N.E., distant three-quarters of a mile, and 1 mile the way we had to go.

W. D.

After landing Grace, Mrs. Dawson and the sick man, on the Longstone, the sailors returned with Mr. Darling and brought off the others,

while Grace and her mother tended the stricken woman. She was lain in Grace's bed where she remained for three days, Grace herself sleeping on a table. The injured men took possession of the big room lined with bunks, which her brothers occupied when they were home. The others were accommodated with shakedown round the kitchen fire. All were destitute, bruised, cut, and utterly exhausted by the terrible experience. There were two of the firemen, John Kidd and John Nicholson, the coal-trimmer, John Macqueen, and the passenger, Daniel Donovan, who had been summoned to the engine-room when the leak began to tax the capacities of the engineers. They dwelt on what they had endured. The carpenter, John Tulloch, and the cook, Jonathan Tickett of Hull, had been with the *Forfarshire* some years; and her loss was a great thing to them.

James Kelly, of Dundee, a weaver, Thomas Buchanan, a baker, added their story of the misgivings of the steerage. In the bowels of the ship, these people had been close up against that ever-growing struggle with the insidious horrors of the starting stay-bolts, the loosened boiler-plates, the drip of the boiling water, that eventually poured forth amidst volumes of hissing steam. . . . Anathema to the company who had sent the *Forfarshire* to sea in such a plight! They were still delirious with shock and fear. That awful journey, leaving them on the stark rock which they could see now in all its naked horror: see it with the great black rollers riding in to hurl themselves in curdy flakes against the inky basalt . . . black sea, black rocks, black-hearted shipowners. . . .

Amongst them all moved Grace and her mother, binding their wounds, finding them dry garments, feeding, comforting, striving to lift their seething thoughts to gratitude for their miraculous escape. Can it be wondered at that later, when the men reached shore, they extolled the kindness of the Darlings? Grace had no thought for her own fatigue; the long night and morning spent in incessant toil and the heaviest of exertions left her tired, but oblivious of her weariness in her pity for those round her.

There could be no hope of getting any help from the mainland. The storm had not abated in the slightest. Old Darling coming in with the last of the crew, reported the dirtiest weather signs in his experience. He prophesied correctly it was likely to be three days before a boat could get off to the Main.

Three days of nursing and feeding and waiting on nine visitors in the lighthouse where Grace and her father would have to be on duty, in Brooks' absence. It would be doubtful if they could get the cable to the Brownsman—provisions would only just last out.

Picture the packed kitchen, still full of the turmoil of the rescue. Picture Grace, still in her curl-papers and soaking clothes, fetching and carrying and arranging, with her pitiful heart aflame for all, and, most of all, for the stricken woman on Grace's little white bed.

. . . And then, picture the moment when the kitchen door opened and Brooks stood on the threshold; Brooks with his friend, William Swan, the Trinity boatman, close behind him; and five others; the

cox of the North Sunderland lifeboat, William Robson with his brothers, James and Michael, Thomas Cuthbertson and Robert Knox—all of them drenched, exhausted . . . staring thunderstruck at the crowd around the fire. The lifeboat *had* gone out !

## CHAPTER FIFTEEN

### THE LIFEBOAT ARRIVES

WILLIAM DARLING acceded to Grace's appeal to go out to the wreck in their small coble, because he was absolutely certain the lifeboats from Bamburgh and North Sunderland could not possibly get out. He was correct about Bamburgh. He was wrong about North Sunderland. His mistake made Grace famous : it also robbed the North Sunderland lifeboatmen of public recognition for one of the bravest and most skilful feats of oarsmanship ever known in the annals of the lifeboat movement.

During the storm of applause that broke around his daughter and himself, William Darling did his utmost to obtain justice for the lifeboatmen whose exploit had been shared by the ewe-lamb of his father's heart, his Benjamin and youngest, William Brooks. When news of the excitement reached Trinity House, and the secretary wrote asking for a statement of what had occurred, William Darling replied with the scantest possible evidence about Grace's part in it ; he never mentioned her threat to attempt the rescue single-handed nor the fact that she had rowed alone for sometime, keeping the coble from being dashed to pieces. But he stressed the journey of the lifeboatmen, the hardships they had suffered, the wretched accommodation they had had to put up with. His letter is an appeal for compensation for them, not for himself and Grace, and in his *Journal*, although he never failed to mention his sons' part in the rescues he recorded for fifty years, while he enters an account of the wreck of the *Forfarshire*, *Grace is not mentioned*.

He had yielded to her entreaties through mistaken judgment ; and in consequence, Grace and he had forestalled the lifeboatmen in their marvellous achievement ; one, as Darling well knew, of far more danger than that which he and Grace had faced.

During those two hours Grace and he had scanned the wreck through the telescope for signs of life, things had been moving quickly at Bamburgh and Seahouses. The wreck had been perceived at daybreak, by the lookout in the observatory on the East Turret of Bamburgh Castle. Now by the provision of the Crewe Trustees, thirty beds were kept in readiness for shipwrecked sailors with machines of all kinds to heave ships out of peril when in dangerous situations ; and lifeboats were stationed at Bamburgh and North Sunderland and premiums given to the first boat which put out.

News of the wreck was promptly communicated to Mr. Smeddle,

resident agent of the Crewe Trustees, who caused the flag to be hoisted half-mast high and a thirty-two pounder fired as a signal to the disabled vessel that her plight was known. The sun rose at 6.19 a.m. and he was roused at once, and got into the saddle to dash to North Sunderland where the Robsons lived.

The annals of the Robson family are as inseparably connected with the history of the North Sunderland lifeboat, as those of the Darling family are bound up with lightkeeping. To-day, James Robson has been Cox of the North Sunderland boat for twenty-three years; his father, Michael, served before him; his grandfather and great-grandfather the William Robson of the marvellous journey.

The fishermen were all awake and at the harbour. The day before, the tide had risen over the breakwater and inner quay, right up to the cottages high above the quay edge. Along this quay were ranged about a hundred barrels belonging to the herring curers, many of which had been lost. After the awful night the sea was raging worse than ever, and every able-bodied man was on the quay, alert. Mr. Smeddle had three miles to ride on a rough coast, and through the downpour. He could not have dressed, given instructions at the Castle, parleyed with the Bamburgh lifeboatmen, got on to his horse and reached Seahouses harbour until some time after seven. He brought the first news of the wreck and asked for helpers.

Extraordinary stories became current (which have lasted to this day) that the North Sunderland men feared and hesitated—many papers said refused—to go. Other reports were printed that they went out and put back. All newspapers reported they had delayed. This was due to the ignorance about the lay of the land. It was said that the wreck was *seen*, guns fired, etc., from North Sunderland—instead of Bamburgh.

But what did happen was this :

Mr. Smeddle summoned the lifeboatmen to launch the lifeboat. They feared that owing to its lightness and the slight depth of water which it drew, the lifeboat could not contend against so heavy a wind but would be liable to overset. But young Brooks was there and he and William Swan, boatman to the Islands, knew the Harkers backwards; for Brooks, the Farnes had no more terror than they had for any of his family. Brooks and the lifeboat crew agreed that an ordinary oared fishing coble with its great rudder could be handled more easily. The men were ready enough. Mr. Smeddle had the seven needed, William, James and Michael Robson, Thomas Cuthbertson, Robert Knox, and, of course, William Swan and Brooks Darling.

In a letter to Grace (November 11th, 1840), the Duke of Northumberland wrote : "*I see by the newspaper that your brother who jumped first into the boat at North Sunderland which went off to the wreck of the 'Forfarshire,' is just married.*" The lifeboatmen reached the wreck at 10 a.m., half an hour after the last of the survivors had been taken off. They had had a five-mile course against the heaviest conditions. At the best of times, with wind and tide in favour and a glassy sea, the Harkers are an hour's journey. Two and a half hours would be wonderfully

good time that morning. If Mr. Smeddle did not get to Seahouses till after seven, they must have been assembled, discarded the idea of the lifeboat, and got into the coble at half-past seven, in the very hour when Grace and her father set out from the Longstone.

Brooks jumped into the boat ; that does not give the impression of delay.

The north-east wind was coming right down on the harbour where, in those days, there was no outer breakwater. They had to row a couple of miles in open water before they could make for the shelter of the Inner Farne. They would probably steer towards the north to get the lee of the island, and then come round the Wideopens and underlee of the Scarecrows. They would get a little shelter off the Inner Farne for about half-a-mile between the Inner and Outer Farnes, though even then, with the gale, tide and currents round the Scarecrows and the Wideopens, there would be little respite.

Then they would have to pull across the Staples Sound, a very difficult and uncomfortable sea, and a considerable pull ; after that, past Staples and Brownsman islands it would still be a very nasty passage with the stream running through the different channels between the Wamses and the Harkers in devious directions.

Over and over again the coble shipped heavy seas ; the lifeboatmen had everything against them but their courage. Like Old Darling, they were used to tackling a "strong job." The exaltation that uplifted Grace was not theirs. This perilous journey was part of the day's work, and they went through it with the grim stern resolution which characterizes the Northumbrian.

On their way, they perceived a steam vessel, the *Liverpool*, of London, going north, and hailed her, asking the captain to proceed to the wreck and offering to pilot the vessel to within a few yards of the lee of the Harkers in seven fathoms of water. But the captain declined the offer.

That the *Liverpool* refused to change her course must not be unduly criticized ; she may have been a light draught vessel, unable to stand the seas, and in any case, the captain had first to think of his passengers. But his refusal confirms the risks the coble ran.

The lifeboat crew of Seahouses pulled on. It took all the exertion possible to reach the rock, and then they found no living soul to greet them : only the pitiful dead. They carried the corpse of the minister higher up the rock, with the little children, and laid them reverently as far beyond the onrush of the waves as they could manage ; then they took counsel. The swell was so tremendous, it was impossible to return to Seahouses. The people on the coast were lighting fires to warn them they could not land. But it was possible to reach the Longstone. They did not need Brooks to assure them of a welcome. Everyone knew the Darlings. For the sake of speedy warmth, dry clothing, food and rest, they could make the last push on.

But they were both tired and disappointed at the fruitless end of such a pull. They got the coble to the island with much difficulty. Low tide was at seven ; at eleven, it was four hours flood ; and they would

reach the Longstone about then if they were at the Harkers by ten. At that time the heavy sea was coming up the guts and over the rocks into the haven and if they tried to bring the coble in she would be knocked to bits. They brought her, therefore, to Sunderland Hole, on the leaside of the island, and hauled her out of the surf, on to the rock. Then they made their way across the wave-washed stones, worn out, to the lighthouse to find it full to overflowing with the survivors they had put out to save.

The worst of it was, there was no shelter for them. The only possible protection was the barracks, a partly ruined building that had been erected for the workmen who had built the lighthouse twelve years ago. Wind and tide had played havoc with it; the roof was broken in, the walls partially demolished, they could light no fire because of the heavy rain; the Darlings could provide no change of clothes nor bed for them, for all the resources of the lighthouse were already drawn on to the full. Such provisions as existed were shared, but the lifeboatmen accepted as a matter of course that they must come last, and the needs of the suffering first. At every tide the waves broke into their so-called shelter and they were forced to crowd into the lighthouse till the water ebbed. The next day they made an attempt to get back to the Main, but were forced to return. Not until Sunday evening, after two days and two nights of terrible privations, did they succeed in making the passage and the swell was still so heavy, they had to let the coble drift to Beadnell some miles south. They took with them the dead bodies.

At Beadnell, they found friends and stayed there all night; then came home with the news. Some idea of the character of these men may be found in the report of Robson, the cox, to one of the many interviewers greedily awaiting news. Instead of dwelling on their discomforts he merely said the Darlings did all that was in their power, "they contrived to manage with what there was, and there was nothing to complain of."

Now suppose the Darlings had not gone outside their own duties, and had left the survivors to be rescued by the North Sunderland men? What would have happened? The tide was still falling; the North Sunderland men would have taken off the people and sought the shelter of the lighthouse. There, Grace and her mother would have given the same ready succour they did give, only the country would have blazed with the heroism of the North Sunderland lifeboatmen. William Robson had coxed the lifeboat crew on one of the most desperate and hazardous journeys in the history of the lifeboat movement, and they had arrived to find it fruitless because of the headlong enthusiasm of a girl, whose vocation was most emphatically not riding the high seas.

The lifeboatmen of North Sunderland did not seek publicity for the deed. Neither they nor the inhabitants of Seahouses and North Sunderland are accustomed to make anything of the dangers they encounter as a matter of course, nor of the devoted service they render, with the same practical unconsciousness, to those imperilled by the sea. Therefore, while all England rang with the story of the courage of the Darlings,



the North Sunderland men kept silent, and by a series of untoward yet inevitable occurrences, were pushed further and further into the background so that finally all recollection of their deed passed out, leaving a general impression that conditions had been too bad and their hearts had failed them.

An incomplete and inaccurate account in the *Berwick Advertiser* of September 15th, 1838, in a curiously subtle way, gives the impression of an abortive journey, although it does not actually distort the facts. At this stage of proceedings, no one had any object in minimizing or suppressing recognition of the North Sunderland lifeboatmen. But the Press was not interested in them. Grace Darling was the attraction; the headline; the news story. The odd thing is that the correspondents from the Berwick papers visited the spot and had their information directly from the men about the harbour. If the men or their friends desired recognition, it would have been the easiest thing in the world, at this time, to have gained it. But the Northumbrian is not communicative; his reserve is as impenetrable as his rock-bound coast; his hatred of self-advertisement, of conscious valour, or anything dimly approaching pose or insincerity, is part of his being.

Grace however was receiving tributes. On the Monday several parties got out to the lighthouse. First came the much needed boat with a full load of provisions. Then Jordan Evans, the Customs officer at Bamburgh, visited the wreck; so did Mr. Sinclair, the Lloyd's agent from Berwick; so did the local reporters and Mr. Smeddle, with boats for the conveyance of the sufferers to the Castle and the assurance that Mrs. Smeddle and the women of Bamburgh would take good care of Mrs. Dawson. Mr. Smeddle was very pleased that his favourite, Grace, should have proved so brave.

"There'll be a silk gown for you for this, Grace," said he. We are told Grace blushed modestly but smiled and looked delighted; she would have been very well satisfied with it, added the chronicler. But in the subsequent flood of gifts and honours with which the public greeted her, there came no silk gown; and oddly enough, in spite of all the money subscribed and invested for her, Grace never attained the wish of her heart!

What did come is another story. Of all that awaited her, Grace guessed nothing. In all the hubbub and excitement of that Monday, with the story of the sinking of the great steamboat, the inquiries and accusations of her unseaworthy condition—the praise for Grace and her father, though given, was of minor consequence. Mr. Smeddle was determined that the inquest on the bodies of Mr. Robb and the Dawson children should be held the following day. Another body, James Gallagher, had been found on the wreck.

The lifeboatmen were gone. If William Darling tried to tell of their achievement, who wanted to listen with this tremendous catastrophe, involving a scandal of world-reaching importance, to be investigated on the morrow's inquest? If there was any talk about the rescue, it was of wonder at Grace's part in it.

Grace herself was so busy getting everybody off and clearing up, that she could spare little time for gossip about herself or the survivors, much less the lifeboatmen. They had done their duty in exceptional circumstances, so had she, and there was an end to it.

In all the ecstatic wonder about Grace's superhuman deed, no one apparently visualized her as the girl she was ; a very hardworked young woman who had all the apartments in the lighthouse to look after and keep in apple-pie order, against the visit of inspection by the Trinity gentlemen which might come any day, or the even more formidable inspection by the Trinity yacht from London. After those three days when the lighthouse had been turned into a hospital, imagine the mess to be cleared up !

Grace had no neighbours to assist her ; from her many letters one sees she had the entire work of the house-cleaning upon her shoulders. In one letter, she plainly states it. After all the commotion she had to get to work and put things straight. Think of that gigantic wash of all their sheets, pillow cases, blankets, towels ! Think of the denuded larder ! The cured herrings which were to last the autumn, the bacon and hams, the barley and pease meal, or the barley and beans they ground themselves ! All vanished, and now to be replaced.

How could Grace pause to think about the possibilities of fame ? How could she pause to try to get recognition for the lifeboatmen ? The lighthouse regulations demanded spotless cleanliness and order in every corner.

And so, all unwittingly she worked away with her usual cheerfulness, a song upon her lips, for her love of singing and the sweetness of her voice is still talked of by her great-grand-nieces and nephew ; and the gathering clouds on the horizon of the future rose up unseen.

Grace had done a man's job on that fateful morning ; the Northumbrian men like their women to stay women. Incredible as it seems, in the village of Seahouses the report arose and was fully told to visitors, that Grace had done nothing particular, had faced no danger, that the coble was in the shelter for all but a few yards, that in the lee of the Harkers and the Bluecaps there would be no heavy sea ; albeit, the surf *at low tide* that day was so bad on the Great Harker that a party of fishermen could not carry anything from the wreck into their coble.

There is no record of ill feeling between William Brooks and his sister. He and his twin, George Alexander, were four years younger than Grace and had been her special charges when the older members of the family left home and hers was the post of " eldest sister." She was always their confidante.

Grace and her family, with the possible exception of her father, seem to have taken the whole circumstances very simply. But the people of North Sunderland did not. There was a strong sense of injustice prevalent in that small spot, and while all the world rang with Grace's glory, she was without honour there.

Of course, in Bamburgh, her birthplace, it was different. She was Bamburgh's heroine.

## CHAPTER SIXTEEN

## FIRST NEWS IN THE PRESS

TO-DAY, Grace would have found her name in headlines right across the world before the day was out, and the week-end papers would feature rumours and surmises, and what front page stories on the Monday when the survivors came ashore ! On the Tuesday and the Wednesday the front page would still be bright with the revelations at the inquest ; on the second page, columns would follow full of an aftermath of interviews ; and news of possible testimonials for the Darlings would keep the Press alert for the rest of the week. But by the following Saturday, Grace would be doing well if she kept a place on the front page and in the Sunday papers, and by the next week, unless some sensational development had occurred like her engagement in a popular revue, or on a newspaper as expert on aquatics, or as author of "The Story of my Life" in a Sunday paper, her name would have died out and had she continued at the lighthouse would have been, in an amazingly short time, forgotten.

News travelled more slowly in 1838, but the sensations of the public were by no means dulled by waiting. News came out in dribbles and the public had time to savour it. Excitement thrives on peeps and hints and rumours ; anticipation whets the appetite, and in a cloud of mystery events loom large as shadows on the Brocken.

In the first news in the Press, Grace's name did not appear ; that an immense calamity had happened, spread like wildfire. A wreck of stupendous size . . . the noted *Forfarshire* . . . with the possible loss of all the passengers . . . contradictory reports from hour to hour . . . with no one knowing who was saved, or who had sailed, or any details except that a colossal tragedy had happened on the Farnes.

But how could news get out ?

There was no system of communication by railway, telegraph, telephone, motor, aeroplane or wireless. Mails were carried by coach and on special occasions correspondents sent their copy by horsemen who with luck and skill could aim at twelve miles an hour across country. Bamburgh is 330 miles from London.

But there were many distributing centres for news. *The Times* depended largely on the great provincial papers ; and local papers were of far greater importance then. When a really great story happened in their locality, the local Press became its chief purveyor to the nation.

Bamburgh was on the Border, between Scotland and the North, on the Edinburgh and London road, where six coaches passed daily. *The Scotsman*, the *Caledonian Mercury*, *Glasgow Chronicle*, *Edinburgh Courant*, *Dundee Courier*, *Manchester Guardian*, *Liverpool Courier*, were all existing with Newcastle and Gateshead, Shields and Tynemouth in easy reach and the *Berwick and Kelso Warer* proudly advertising its

circulation coastwise from Newcastle to Edinburgh and in all the great industrial cities of the North and Midlands. The *Berwick Advertiser* was close upon its heels.

Berwick was but two hours ride from Bamburgh.

Only unfortunately, the *Berwick Advertiser* came out on the Friday, the *Warner* early on the Saturday—just too late for mention of the wreck.

That the *Forfarshire* had struck was known on the Friday when the lifeboatmen went out; but as, owing to the storm, they could not return to land no full information of who was saved or what had happened came until the Sunday night. By that time, the whole North was thrilled, stunned, horrified, and eager for news . . . any news.

A little was forthcoming on the Saturday. The crew in the *Forfarshire's* boat had escaped miraculously. The boat had been caught by the current and whirled through the raging waters of Piper's Gut, the one channel of possible escape. They had only two oars and could not row. Pursuing their wild helpless course, they had drifted south and been picked up by a Montrose sloop and brought into Shields that same night. They could and did give news of what had happened up to the time they left the sinking vessel, and the *Gateshead Observer* brought out a second edition on the Saturday afternoon. The men stated they had scarcely any hope of the passengers and remainder of the crew being alive. The editor said that a report had reached Shields that the *Forfarshire* was lying high and dry upon the Farnes, and a gentleman just returned from North Sunderland stated a boat had gone out to the rock, that about 12 or 15 people were reported to be safely landed there and it was expected all the passengers would be got ashore in safety. After chronicling these reports the *Gateshead Observer* concluded with :

“The news of the wreck has created great excitement in the district and much painful anxiety is felt for further intelligence.”

Meanwhile, as far north as Leith, Captain Sharpe of the *Caledonia* from London, arrived on Sunday to say he had recognized the masts of the “fine steamship *Forfarshire*, appearing above water.” He had heard some lives had been saved but bodies had been seen floating by the wreck. This came out in the *Caledonian Mercury* on the Monday.

In Dundee, reports from private channels had been coming in since Saturday, but they were contradictory, there was nothing definite or authoritative and the public was worked up to a high pitch of excitement when the four o'clock mail on Sunday afternoon came in; no letters, however, were received. “Before the arrival of the night mail at eleven o'clock a dense crowd collected in front of the post office, amongst whom a death-like silence prevailed, testifying the interest which pervaded them as to the fate of the crew and passengers of the *Forfarshire*. When the mail came up the guard announced, that a gentleman who had come to Edinburgh with the London mail instructed him to carry the intelligence to Dundee that thirty-five of the crew and passengers of the steamship were drowned. This news being mere report, the multitude waited in breathless anxiety for the declaration of the gentleman

connected with the Hull Steam Packet Company then in the post office. That declaration, we are sorry to say, more than confirmed their worst fears. It was founded on the following letters, by which it will be seen that this dreadful catastrophe is now established in its most distressing features." (*Dundee Courier*, September 11th, 1838.)

Letters then followed from Mr. Ritchie, the passenger who was saved, and from Mr. Smeddle of Bamburgh, both of whom gave little more than advice of the wreck. The first mate, James Duncan's letter, was almost identical with the account in the *Gateshead Observer*.

The duties of Commander of the great new steamboat were considered so onerous that the first mate was appointed Sailing-Master, which title the *Courier* gives him. James Duncan gave the names of the crew in the boat, made a rough guess at the number of passengers in the cabin, and described the boat's adventures. He did not describe their miraculous passage through Piper's Gut as the crew at that time had no idea of the course they had taken. There was also a statement that "This forenoon (Tuesday) James Duncan, the first mate, Allan Stewart, engineer, James Hill, sailor and other three of the crew of the *Forfarshire*, arrived here by the Leith steamer; J. Duncan and Stewart immediately proceeded to the Hull Steam Packet Co.'s office. Neither of them could give any later particulars respecting the passengers and crew of the steamship than were already communicated by them; except that Duncan positively asserts that he saw Mrs. Robert Alison of Dundee come on board the steamer with her luggage at Hull, accompanied by two young gentlemen, supposed to be her son and grandson. He states that he did not observe her afterwards in the course of the voyage. Duncan also states that he saw a son of Mr. Brown, shipbuilder in Perth, on board."

On Tuesday the *Tynemouth Mercury* had a lengthy report as well as the *Edinburgh Observer*. Still no details had appeared of the missing passengers. Paragraphs were coming out now, everywhere.

"Fears are entertained," said the *Glasgow Chronicle*, "that amongst the passengers lost . . . are two of our most respectable citizens, Mr. J. M'Leod, of M'Leod and Davidson, and Mr. James Preston, late of Preston, Bannatyne, Moir & Co. It is known that these gentlemen meant to sail from Hull in the *Forfarshire*; both were to write home on their arrival in Dundee and not a line has been received from either of them."

Not only did no one know who had escaped on to the rock; it was the custom to collect the fares on board and there was no passenger list.

In those first terrible days, everyone whose friends and relatives had been contemplating a journey north was waiting hour by hour for news, and this harrowing anxiety was felt all over the country.

Five days after the *Forfarshire* had struck the rock, and no news yet of how the wreck had happened, of who were saved, or how!

No mention of the marvellous rescue! No mention of the damning charges being made that day at Bamburgh where the inquest on the bodies found upon the rock had hastily been convened.

Events were shaping destined to make the *Forfarshire* one of the most momentous wrecks in history, but as yet no one guessed at what was coming, least of all Grace Darling.

## CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

## THE INQUEST

BUT meanwhile, picture Bamburgh !

Dundee waited in deathlike silence : Bamburgh was the whirlpool of the storm.

Since dawn on Friday, the coast was lined with watchers who could actually see those ominous shafts driving up into the skies, overshadowing the Harkers with their silent testimony to terrific catastrophe. An immense steamboat, the famous *Forfarshire*, lying there, in what condition no one knew !

On Saturday, however, young Mr. Ritchie of Ruthven, who had jumped into the boat with the eight members of the crew, arrived from Shields. He had come at once to find out what had happened to his aunt and uncle and heard that they had perished, and he was the only cabin passenger who had been saved.

Mr. Ritchie found himself in a difficult position. The crew was being universally condemned for getting off in the boat without attempting to save the women and children. How had Mr. Ritchie come to be with them ? As a matter of fact, there had been no time in which to save anyone. Mr. Ritchie had heard the captain's cry and had instantly leapt from his berth, clasping his pantaloons in his arms and very wisely not waiting to put them on. If modesty had been preserved, his life most certainly would have been lost. He had bolted up the companion, emerged on deck to see the boat not yet lowered from the davits and had leapt into her, his pantaloons still in his arms, being the third man in. To this, the entire crew later swore on oath. It will be remembered the mate, James Duncan, seeing the ship was lost, after the boat was lowered, caught hold of a rope and swung himself into her hoping to keep her near the ship and render help to the drowning.

Mr. Ritchie announced *he* had made a leap when the boat was five yards from the *Forfarshire* ; no small feat with his pantaloons still clasped tightly in his arms ! He was miraculously shielded for he had some sovereigns in the pockets and was able to buy clothes when he got ashore and come up by the coach. He related his piteous tale of having devoted his whole time on the dreadful voyage to baling out water with a seaman's shoe.

Mr. Ritchie was young, agitated, highly strung and deeply concerned for his own safety ; with his unerring instinct for self-preservation, he joined in the general outcry against the owners of the *Forfarshire*. Later, the *Scotsman* reported Mr. Ritchie stated that Captain Humble had told him he knew the boilers were defective from the very first, and that

the Captain went inside instead of outside the Farnes with a view of shortening the passage. When this was proved untrue Mr. Ritchie sheltered himself by declaring he had never given this out to anyone who to his knowledge had been connected with a newspaper.

Mr. Ritchie's appearance proved his eagerness to know the fate of his relatives and fellow passengers : the crew was further discredited by their inhumanity in going to Dundee. The mate and engineer had gone by coach ; the other members of the crew were on their way to Leith in the Newcastle steamer the *Eclipse*. They were all going back to the Company.

Mr. Ritchie's visit inflamed Bamburgh opinion to fever height : he could be reasonably sure that anything the crew said against him would not be credited, and he departed for Edinburgh on the Monday without waiting for the inquest on the following day.

When the lifeboatmen returned on Sunday night, they added their corroborative testimony to Mr. Ritchie's story. Had not the rescued steerage passengers been vehement in their denunciation of the state of the *Forfarshire's* engines when she left Hull ?

For three days the survivors had been shut up in the lighthouse watching that awful sea sweep across the rock from which they had so nearly been washed away. For three days they had poured their woes out to compassionate listeners ignorant of this new mode of transit and ready to accept the word of those who had come from the doomed steamboat, notably one Daniel Donovan, who gave himself out as one of the firemen of the *Forfarshire*. Think of the surcharged emotional atmosphere ! Mrs. Dawson, deranged by the horrors she had undergone, prostrate on Grace's bed, with Grace nursing, condoling, her heart aflame with pity ! The bruised shattered sufferers, their small possessions swept away, crowding the lighthouse kitchen, adding their recollections, their fears, their premonitions to the ever-repeated story. The lifeboat crew, shivering and hungry, coming in to hear their tale and unite with the sufferers in condemnation of the Company who had sent forth what Donovan and the steerage passengers declared a death-trap, known as such before she sailed !

On the Monday, when boats could put off to the Longstone, the whole population of Bamburgh was afire with indignation, not only against the owners, but also the rescued members of the crew. Everyone belonging to the *Forfarshire* was suspect. No actual accusation was brought against the crew but there was a general feeling that they would naturally support the company in whose employ they sailed, and after Mr. Ritchie's appearance and story an impression of their general inhumanity decidedly prevailed. Their testimony was not desired. It had been subtly discredited.

The leading men of Bamburgh, with first and foremost Mr. Smeddle, and also the Berwick and Newcastle reporters were met with the tragic sight of Mrs. Dawson, and the passionate denunciations of Daniel Donovan corroborated by his fellow passengers.

Mr. Smeddle, as agent of the Crewe Trustees and foreman of the jury,

immediately convened an inquest on the bodies found upon the rock for the following day although the coroner for the district, Mr. A. T. Russel, was from home. *But none of the ship's crew on the Longstone were called as witnesses* ; the two foremen, John Kidd and John Nicholson, the coal trimmer, John Macqueen, the cook, Jonathan Tickett of Hull, who had been with the *Forfarshire* some years. The ship's carpenter, Tulloch, was left at the Longstone, in charge of the wreck ; but it would have been quite easy for him to come ashore for a few hours. The others were taken off to Bamburgh and were there when the inquest was being held. Why the inquest was arranged so hastily without notice being given to the Company who owned the *Forfarshire*, can only be attributed to the general desire of expressing the prevailing horror and anger.

The lifeboatmen's safe arrival had been exciting, Grace and her father's gallant deed added to the general stir, but the thought that dominated all was the need for a public vote of censure on the Company which had sent the *Forfarshire* to her doom, through greed for gain and negligence, before its crew and owners could excuse themselves and craftily escape the condemnation they deserved.

Mr. Smeddle was a very important person ; his word in Bamburgh was law. Bamburgh respected his opinion. Bamburgh also was in complete agreement with the need for action.

No one seems to have kept his head and asked for a dispassionate inquiry.

To add to the perplexities, the Lloyd's agent for Bamburgh, Mr. Bartholomew Younghusband, was ailing, and Mr. James Sinclair of Berwick (then a sub-agency under Dunbar) had to be summoned. The Younghusbands were, and are noted as a family of gallant, knowledgeable seamen : James Sinclair knew nothing of Bamburgh or that coast or the Farnes. On the Monday he visited the wreck and came to an entirely erroneous conclusion as to its cause. As Lloyd's agent, his word was taken as conclusive. Afterwards he was to express profound regret, but the mischief had been done. Mr. Sinclair, who knew nothing of the similarities of the revolving lights upon the Inner Farnes and Longstone, of Piper's Gut, of the currents and the head winds, examined a fragment of a boiler-plate (knowing also nothing about boiler-plates) and passed judgment. He also appointed William Darling deputy agent for Lloyd's. William Darling knew everything there was to know about the Farnes but he knew absolutely nothing about steamboats. Naturally, he accepted Mr. Sinclair's verdict, as did everybody. How could William Darling or anyone realize that a fundamental ignorance about the conditions the *Forfarshire* had encountered, could influence Mr. Sinclair when he announced the wreck had happened because of the condition of the boiler-plates ?

The inquest was held on Tuesday afternoon in the house of Hugh Ross, a respected inhabitant, whose inn stood on what now is the Victoria Hotel. A deputy coroner, Stephen Reed, of Newcastle, conducted the jury to view the four bodies at the Castle. On their return



the Coroner held forth about the means at hand for punishing guilty owners. He explained that owing to the occurrence of such events many juries had levied a heavy deodand intended to mark the opinion of the jury as to some neglect or improper proceeding. The evidence now to be produced would suggest to the jury whether any such deodand should be levied.

The steerage passengers were then summoned. First, James Kelly, the weaver, a tragic witness to those nights of terror. He with others had been set to the pumps. During the last night the captain and steward had come into the forecabin to collect the fares. The captain and the mate were on the deck all night, they had brought witness and the others at the pumps some porter and encouraged them to fresh exertions. He had heard the captain and fireman say the boilers had been repaired before they left Hull, and that they were soon to have new ones; that the committee were to have a meeting at Dundee to determine whether the vessel was to be laid up until the spring, or whether they were immediately to have new boilers put in.

Thomas Buchanan, a steerage passenger on board the *Forfarshire*, and who was present and heard the examination of the first witness, corroborated it in every particular.

Daniel Donovan, of Hull, sworn, said, he had known the *Forfarshire* steam-vessel for this year past. Was shipped on board of her as fireman for the first time this last voyage. . . . Before they left the Humber the boilers were discovered to be leaking very much; they were then not twenty miles from Hull. At this time the starboard boiler had all leaked out, and they were obliged to put two fires out. The captain and mate must have known of the circumstance. It was the duty of the engineer to report it. When the boiler first ran out there was nothing said about taking the vessel back to Hull, which might have been done very easily; cannot say whether the passengers were informed that the boiler was defective. In the course of Thursday night the same boiler that had leaked out would not hold again; as fast as the water was pumped into it, it leaked out again. Before 12 o'clock on Thursday night it began to blow very hard, and the sea rose very much; at 12 o'clock it was a perfect hurricane. . . . At 12 o'clock witness gave the watch up, and went down below. He did not come up again until the vessel struck. Witness could not tell where the vessel was at 12 o'clock, when he went below, not having been on the coast before. Witness states that before he left the Humber he would have given all he possessed to be on shore again. He considered the vessel altogether unseaworthy. There was nothing to prevent them returning when the leak was discovered, and if he had been master he would have considered it his duty to put back again to Hull. When he felt the ship strike on the rock, he immediately ran up on deck, and was nearly washed overboard, and in less than five minutes the after part of the vessel parted, and was washed away; the fore part struck upon the rock. Witness and the others who were saved remained on the wreck till the tide ebbed, and then got upon the rock.

Jordan Evans, of Bamburgh, Custom-house officer, being sworn and examined, said that he had been on the rock where the wreck of the *Forfarshire* lies. The fore part of the vessel and paddle wheels were lying there. The engine, likewise, was all there. All the materials before the paddle box, consisting of mast, rigging, anchors, and cables, were saved. Believed that the materials saved must be worth £200.

The Coroner then said this was all the evidence that was at hand. The poor woman was in the village, but in such a distressed state that unless the jury deemed further evidence necessary, he would not call upon her. He might inform the jury that two of the directors of the Packet Company were in the village, who had not thought it necessary to attend the inquest, nor yet to bring forward any evidence. If they had shown any inclination to have done either, he would have granted them every opportunity. No mention was made of the members of the crew, including the ship's carpenter or the firemen and coal trimmer whose testimony about the state of the boilers might have been thought more valuable than that of the steerage passengers, for, as it turned out after, Donovan was not engaged as foreman, he had been given a free passage to Dundee, and only called in with the other members of the steerage.

There can be no question that the inquest was prejudged by a highly hostile jury. "The directors," whom all knew were in the village, were Mr. Just, the manager of the company, Mr. Boyd, one of the directors, and Mr. Laird and Mr. Allison, relatives of three of the drowned passengers; they had arrived at Bamburgh that day, having posted from Dundee directly they heard the news, without pausing a moment for refreshment. In spite of the commotion created by their arrival, no one had told them anything about the inquest much less that it was to be held that afternoon, and they had naturally gone out at once to see the wreck. Not till Mr. Just had returned from the wreck, did one of the Berwick reporters inform him the inquest was then proceeding. All the Dundee visitors immediately hastened to the spot, and arrived in time to hear the jury was then in private, engaged upon their verdict. They were refused a hearing; when the jury reappeared, they, with everyone else heard the vote of censure.

Verily the sword had fallen!

"Wrecked on board the *Forfarshire* steam packet by the imperfections of the boilers, and the culpable negligence of the captain in not putting back to port. Deodand on the vessel, £100."

Mischief, mischief was abroad that night. The lifeboatmen who had found the bodies and brought them back to Beadnell were not summoned; surely an amazing omission. So it came, their heroic journey was never given due publicity. But the rescue by Grace Darling and her father was being told by the survivors. Grace's name was coming into the story; the reporters, agog for picturesque detail, seized on her achievement.

The scandal of the ship's condition was the big feature however. A more damning and explicit verdict had never been given nor more

dramatic and united evidence. What chance had Mr. Just of gaining a fair, or indeed, any sort of hearing ?

One is brought up sharply against the immense difficulties of getting at the truth in those days when communication was so tardy. On that very Tuesday, James Duncan the mate and Alan Stewart had reached Dundee and were making solemn depositions. Mr. Just and Mr. Boyd could not get at them. They could not get word from Mr. Borrie of the Tay Foundry where the boilers and machinery had been made, nor from Barret & Sons, the Hull firm who had inspected the boilers on the last voyage. The wildest accusations and reports were being made, shewing abysmal ignorance, all reports, however contradictory, being accepted with complete credulity.

Mr. Just could find one person only who would listen to him, the reporter from the *Berwick Warder*. Mr. Just knew that the Press of the whole country would quote the *Warder*, and he went off to Berwick to state his facts.

He pointed out all boilers were liable to the springing of a stay or rivet by which a temporary leak might be occasioned ; and that the *Forfarshire* had only run for two years and four months. He quoted an instance where a first-class steamer on her maiden voyage had her machinery stopped through the springing of two stay bolts, and that had this happened in the same conditions as the *Forfarshire* encountered the consequences would inevitably have been the same.

A report had actually been spread that the ten or fifteen tons of boiler-plate in the cargo were for the purpose of making new boilers, when anyone conversant with the trade of Dundee knew the *Forfarshire* was one of the chief carriers of such goods. The report that the directors intended calling a meeting about putting in new boilers was utterly untrue ; a meeting had been convened for a future date, to discuss a possible change in trade. Finally Mr. Just reputed the charge of profiteering by pointing out the *Forfarshire* was not owned by only two or three individuals seeking profit out of her to the neglect of keeping her up in thorough good order and repair ; but was the property of upwards of one hundred and sixty partners, interested in maintaining a regular steam communication between the ports of Dundee and Hull, and the greater part of whom were regularly transmitting or receiving their goods and merchandise through her medium ; and such was their confidence in the vessel, that at the general meeting of proprietors, held only in March last, they caused the sum insured to be reduced to one-half the amount previously effected upon her.

Mr. Just sent immediately for further depositions, but think of the time it took to get the facts those days. The verdict was given on the Tuesday, and not until the 19th—a week after—were the desired depositions secured. They were not printed in the *Berwick papers* until September 28th. Then people read that Robert Matthewson, foreman of Mr. Borrie, Tay Foundry, Dundee, solemnly and sincerely declared, that he was foreman with Mr. Borrie at the time that the boilers and machinery of the *Forfarshire* were made, paid much attention to the

work when going on ; that he had been in foundries at Glasgow, Greenock, London, Liverpool and Hull, at all of which places he had seen marine engines and boilers making ; and that the boilers of the *Forfarshire* were of the most modern and improved construction ; that the boiler-plates for the furnace flues and bottom were about three-eighths of an inch thick, and the plates for the sides, ends and top, five-sixteenths of an inch thick ; that these were the usual thickness of the plates of which marine boilers are generally constructed ; and seldom were heavier made, unless for high-pressure engines.

The *Forfarshire* was finished and started in the month of May 1836, and a very moderate quantity of repairs had been required for the boiler and machinery ; in the course of his experience he had known repeated instances of stud rivets and other rivets of new boilers in first-class steamers giving way at sea, and being the cause of stopping the engines until the leak in the boiler was stopped. He was on board of the *Forfarshire*, when in the harbour of Dundee, on the 25th of August last, when he examined the machinery, and at the same time saw the boilers ; the engines were in fact working as well as when the vessel was first started, as proved on the voyage previous to the last by diagrams taken by the indicator.

On the same day Alan Stewart testified on his sworn oath, that he was the first or principal engineer on board the *Forfarshire*, and was so during the last eleven months : if in the course of any voyage repairs upon the machinery and boilers were necessary, he immediately, on the arrival of the steamer at Dundee or Hull, gave information to the managers, and the repairs were at once made. When at Hull, last voyage, the boilers were thoroughly examined by the foreman of Messrs. Barret & Sons, boiler makers, Hull ; three of their boiler makers were on board, and they, after closing up a small leak in the middle boiler, caused by the springing of a rivet, left the ship, after stating that " the boilers were all right as far as they could see." The boilers were thoroughly cleaned out every second or third trip, and on the 2nd August the boilers were cleaned out at Hull. All marine boilers were apt to leak, and leaks are occurrences that frequently happen without occasioning any alarm. He never stated to any person that the boilers of the *Forfarshire* were done for or much worn ; he had never expressed his opinion to any person that it would not be safe to go to sea with the *Forfarshire* till a new boiler was procured ; he had no cause to express such an opinion ; he considered that in going to sea no danger whatever more than usual was to be apprehended.

And then he said a person of the name of Daniel Donovan came on board the steamer when at Hull, with the view of coming to Dundee in search of a situation, but he came *as a passenger*, and was never in the engine-room from the time of his coming on board until 7 o'clock of the morning following the day they sailed. Donovan was never asked to give any assistance, and gave none until 6 o'clock on Thursday morning when he assisted at the pump on deck, and about an hour after that he came below to the engine-room ; and, as extra assistance

had then become necessary, the declarant asked him to fill one of the furnaces ; and this was the first time Donovan was in the engine-room.

Mr. Just's visit to the Berwick editors had a little effect. On September 14th and 15th the editors of both papers referred to a visit from someone acquainted with boiler-making and the possibility of rivets having given way, and gave a guarded hint that possibly something might be said on behalf of the company. The *Advertiser*, however, pointed out that any attempt of the Company to defend themselves would of course be regarded with suspicion.

But the public was not interested in any possible defence. In the days when a quarter of a column was considered a large space to give to a description of a wreck, the *Warder* came out on the Saturday with four columns and a headline :

WRECK OF THE " FORFARSHIRE " STEAMSHIP  
FORTY-FIVE LIVES LOST

The account was divided into sections with an illustration of the wreck and the lighthouse.

- (1) Situation of passengers and crew.
- (2) Exertions made for the rescue of the sufferers, Heroic conduct of Grace Darling and her father.
- (3) Number of those lost and of the survivors.
- (4) State of the boilers.
- (5) Present state of the vessel.
- (6) Coroner's inquest on the bodies found.
- (7) Excitement at Dundee.
- (8) Latest particulars.

On the same date the *Gateshead Observer* mentions Grace and also the boatmen. The *Times* also mentions the rescue by Grace Darling. She made her début in the glare of a spotlight directed on a crowded stage, already holding everyone's attention. During the first week, interest centred on particulars of the wreck, who had sailed in the *Forfarshire*, and who was saved. Now came the scandal about the Dundee Packet Company. The jury's verdict set everybody talking.

Mr. Just hastened back to Dundee to collect his witnesses, his depositions.

In the revulsion that always follows a strong outbreak of public feeling, Bamburgh began to have faint doubts as to the justice of the verdict. Tulloch was at the Longstone, with his quiet voice getting a chance now of being heard. He stuck to it that the boilers were well looked after. The people of Bamburgh were becoming used to Daniel Donovan, a good many of those hard-headed seagoing men were having the opportunity of estimating the worth of his opinions. They did not care to admit they might be wrong, but they were having time now for reflection.

Mr. Just and Mr. Boyd and the witnesses they were collecting, were

making known incontestable facts about boilers to a village public that was educated and intelligent.

But the news of the scandal was travelling in its lurid but leisurely way to London ; *The Times* quoted the "Warder's" report of the 15th, four days later. During the next week every paper had it. The scandal was on everybody's lips, and with the tale of the Packet Company's inhumanity came, in marvellous contrast, the story of Grace Darling's deed.

## CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

### THE SCANDAL AND THE MEETINGS

ONE of the first questions that rises in the minds of anyone acquainted with shipping is—"What was Lloyd's doing? We hear of the Lloyd's Agents. What about the Lloyd's certificate—the conditions of the *Forfarshire*? How could she leave Dundee without it?"

Mr. Crichton, the Surveyor of Shipping for Lloyd's, answered that question in a letter to the *Dundee Courier* on September 13th.

"SIR,

"The melancholy occurrence of the loss of the steamer *Forfarshire* has created the most intense excitement throughout this town and neighbourhood, and the deepest sympathy in the fate of the numerous sufferers and their connections by this heart-rending calamity. There are rumours abroad, which, if correct, tend greatly to aggravate this deplorable loss of life and property. It is evident to every person versant with nautical matters that a steamer with her engines disabled is the most helpless craft in a storm that can float upon the ocean : her paddles which give her such velocity when all is in right working order, become the most insuperable barriers to her making any headway under canvas and leave her to the mercy of the elements.

"... It is to be regretted that a proper and just character is not assigned to every vessel that floats. The public may not be generally aware that this desirable object may now in a very great measure be obtained by the rules and regulations adopted by the committee of Lloyd's Register of British and Foreign shipping, who have appointed practical men at all the principal ports in the United Kingdom, who are required to examine and report the condition of every vessel that will submit to have them classed in their register, where the character is assigned, according to their intrinsic worth as nearly as can be ascertained ; and it is one of the rules of this society that all vessels *navigated by steam* shall be surveyed at least twice each year and their condition carefully reported ; and that, with respect to the boilers and machinery, there shall be a certificate from some competent master engineer, describing their state and condition, according to schedule which fully describes every part of the machinery—

when, on such inspections, a character will be given them in the register according to their condition.

"It may be a matter of surprise to learn that all the steamers belonging to this town are without any character or class, having all declined survey for classification. Underwriters, therefore, who are all in possession of the register cannot complain when they meet with loss upon vessels which have never been submitted to inspection for this purpose ; but the public who may not be in possession of these facts and have no copy of the register book, are more excusable ; but if they were to require that every vessel who carries passengers should have an appropriate certificate of her character publicly exhibited in the cabin for their inspection and never to be older than six months, they would have a guarantee that some attention had been paid to their condition ; while the very circumstances of a periodical investigation would induce the owners to keep them in proper repair to maintain their character.

"A regard to my official capacity as Surveyor of Shipping for this port has induced me to trouble you with the above remarks that the public may be aware of the fact that I have never declined the performance of my duty when permitted or requested by shipowners or agents ; but I have no power to obtrude myself.

I am, Sir, Your obedient servant,

DAVID CRIGHTON,

*Surveyor of Shipping for Lloyd's."*

Dundee, *September 13th*, 1838.

There is no question that this incident strengthened Lloyd's considerably in developing this side of their work. The repercussions of the wreck and Grace's deed were infinite in their scope and influence. It was as if a revivifying wave swept through every activity contributory to the welfare and the safety of seafarers.

Grace had come into prominence at a very important moment in the history of shipping. The time was ready for regulation of transport by this new force of steam, and it was only natural that the demand for greater efficiency should come from the mouth of the Tyne. Here had been born and nurtured the first great life-saving movement ; in the Gentlemen of Lawes House, the Brethren of Newcastle Trinity House, and the Committee of the Coal Trade, were men of intelligence, accustomed to take the lead in national affairs and to act with determination and energy.

Grace was of the North, and the North turned the occasion to practical use. The first meeting was held at Newcastle on September 24th ; other meetings were promptly summoned in the principal cities. Protection was demanded for those who travelled in steamboats. Grace was the figurehead. The Ship of Reform had a guardian angel of most feminine appeal at the prow.

Regulation of the chaotic conditions then prevailing was inevitable.

America was far ahead of us and her shipping laws were well known and constantly referred to in the campaign for reform of ours. But because the wreck of the *Forfarshire* pushed the nation into action, the consequence was Grace Darling's deed and name were kept before the public for years instead of days.

After a very short time there was nothing of news value in the wreck and Grace's part in the rescue, but for a very long time there was news of vital and universal interest about the inspection of steamships. The rapid progress of science had placed people in the midst of dangers which their forefathers had never known. It was pointed out that passengers could not judge the boilers of a steamer as they could the wheels and axle of a stage coach. The speaker naively continued that he expected the Commander would not allow it.

A fortnight later (September 29th) *The Times* itself was joining in the campaign for reform. Steamboat accidents were becoming notorious : nine people had lost their lives by the bursting of the boilers of the steamboat *Victoria* ; two boilers of the *James Gallagher* had burst upon the Clyde with two lives lost—also the boilers of the *Vivid* of Shields and the *Tweedside* of Newcastle had exploded. To this list, now was added the loss of the *Forfarshire*. None of the Companies owning the vessels whose boilers had burst appeared to have incurred public censure, but even at this date *The Times* proceeded to enlarge on Daniel Donovan's evidence and refute the testimony of the later witnesses as "special pleading."

The concensus of opinion, though much more stringent regulations were demanded, came to this. That a Board should be formed, under the Board of Trade, to register and classify all steam vessels, which would make periodical surveys of same. District Surveyors were to be appointed and only on their reports being satisfactory, should the Board give licences to ply. The Board must investigate all accidents, and such reports must be made public.

Licences to carry passengers were deemed of great importance.

No passenger licences must be granted to any vessels having safety valves whose spindles are exposed on deck : and penalties must be imposed on engineers or masters who loaded passenger vessels beyond the prescribed weight. One recalls the loss of the *Phillipar* on reading that sufficient boats must be carried : also sufficient hoses to convey water to any part of the vessel, with water-buckets and a moveable fire-engine.

Most urgent of all was the demand for certificated engineers, whose qualifications should be rigorously examined.

Grace was mentioned at every meeting, because the promoters expressed their appreciation by starting a subscription for her and her father. The Exchange, the Newsrooms, the Booksellers and the Banks were drawn into the service. The memorial was signed in one place, and subscriptions were received at the banks. The progress of the Fund was chronicled as the meetings continued, and reports of both were printed in the papers. The popular interest in Grace kept interest in the meetings alive, and the reports of the meetings kept



Grace's name in the news columns. As the meetings were held all over Scotland and the northern part of England, and Press accounts were quoted in London newspapers, it will be seen how firmly her name became established in public consciousness. One might grow tired of eulogies and twice-told tales, but these meetings were having very positive effects, and the reports were followed with deep interest by the public. Lord John Russell was interested. Petitions were going up to him from all the big cities. He agreed to hold a Government inquiry into the cause of the wreck. An Act of Parliament was to be formulated for the reform of our shipping laws. And all the time Grace stayed suspended, as an exquisite benignant Presence, lifting the whole question out of sordid materialism into one of humane and compassionate protection of the public.

Grace herself appears to have taken not the slightest interest in the agitation. Reforms in shipping laws did not come within a woman's province. The stern business of navigation belonged to men. That she was one of the chief instruments in rousing people to take action for protecting passengers, never entered Grace's consciousness. People were being very kind to praise her so much ; that was all she made of it. Her vision was too narrow to grasp that the safety of thousands was to be aided by her impulsive action.

She was neither interested in nor grateful for the wider effects of her deed. All this clamour about herself seemed to her purely personal and at first, she was touched and pleased, though bewildered.

Her father and her family also never followed the progress of the reforms. The progress of the Fund was the only part of the business which in old Darling's thoughts had anything to do with them ; laws and regulations about shipping were the business of the gentlemen of Trinity, not his. How much less, then, would such things concern Grace ?

Florence Nightingale was as sensitive as Grace, but she faced the publicity she hated and realized its power to effect the purpose for which she lived. Josephine Butler endured public execration with a gallantry that kept her to *her* purpose, colours flying, to the end.

Grace Darling had no purpose beyond doing her duty in the station in which she considered God had placed her : she lived to be a good light-keeper's daughter, and a kind and useful sister. Her family completely bounded her horizon.

But the good ship of Reform sailed on, perhaps the more surely for the disarming modesty of the angel at the prow. Justice was done to Grace, perhaps a little more than justice in some people's opinion.

For her humanity was exalted in such high relief, it continued to cast a damning shadow on the inhumanity of the owners of the *Forfarshire*, in spite of the depositions and the witnesses Mr. Just had now assembled to bring forward, and for which opportunity on the first day of October came.

## CHAPTER NINETEEN

## A FURTHER INQUEST

THE public, being in a great stir by now about other issues connected with the wreck of the *Forfarshire*, missed the last act of a drama full of human interest.

The body of a fireman from the *Forfarshire* was found, necessitating a further inquest at the house of Hugh Ross of Bamburg, and with the same coroner, T. A. Russell, on the afternoon of Monday, October 1st.

William Taylor, by trade a tailor in Bamburg, who had found the body, was first called. Again one asks why were not the lifeboatmen who had found the other bodies called at the first inquest?

Donovan had come to this inquest with his customary zeal for prominence and held forth as piquantly as usual with an even more dramatic version of the engineer's and captain's controversy: "that he heard the captain say to the engineer, that 'if he could do no better with the engine, he had better stop it, and he would heave the ship to,' he did not hear what answer the engineman made, but heard the captain reply 'he had better take charge altogether,' and left the engine-room."

Other evidence was given re the wreck by another Bamburg man but none of them could identify the body and the inquest was adjourned till Wednesday, to allow time to bring the carpenter of the *Forfarshire* from the island.

Mr. Just was there, but he was denied a copy of the evidence as the jury unanimously resolved that the evidence should be suppressed until the inquest was concluded.

By this time the local papers, together with the Press at large, had more or less admitted that boilers were subject to accidents and the *Forfarshire's* had proved no exception to the rule. Mr. Just was no longer a villain of the deepest dye, but no one was very interested now in Mr. Just. He had been condemned wrongly at the first inquest, and the neighbourhood preferred to talk no more about the matter; the sale of the remains of the wreck was to take place the next day, Tuesday, and people were arriving from all parts to secure souvenirs. Mr. Just went to the sale; so did the agent and sub-agent for Lloyd's, Mr. Bartholomew Younghusband by this time being apparently able to attend. Mr. Adamson, shipbuilder, Dundee, was a purchaser to a considerable amount, and the splendid ship-bell of the vessel was purchased by Mr. Clark, of Belford Hall.

The second scene of the constantly deferred further inquest took place the next day. For the first time Tulloch, the carpenter, was called and gave the evidence he could have given with perfect ease at the first inquest. But who was giving thought to details about the *Forfarshire's* seaworthiness by now?

On Wednesday, at 1 p.m., the inquest was resumed. John Tulloch

of Dundee was called and said, "On Sunday last John Willey and another man brought me to a body lying on the Brownsman Island; the boat which picked up the body had come from Monk's House. They wished me to see if I knew him. I went and saw the body; it is the body of William Douthy. Deceased was a fireman on board of the *Forfarshire* steamer." He then stated, "The *Forfarshire* left Hull on the 5th of September at 6 p.m. for Dundee. . . . Before we left Hull the boilers were repaired. The vessel struck the rock at a quarter before 4 o'clock on Friday morning the 7th September last. *When we left Hull I considered the hull and machinery to be good, seaworthy, and in good working order; had I considered them otherwise I would not have gone with her. The vessel was strong and quite seaworthy.* The boilers appeared to me to be made of good materials, as well as the engine. The boilers of a steam vessel will last about 6 years. The boilers of the *Forfarshire* were 2 years and 4 months old. The engineers and firemen appeared to me to be always attentive to their duty. Whenever the engine was out of repair it was always immediately repaired, and every attention paid to it as well as the boilers. The Captain was a steady, trustworthy man, and always attentive to his duty both on sea and land, and a good seaman."

Daniel Donovan, recalled and questioned, stated, "I have known new steam boilers to give way; and an instance occurred when I was on board of the *Tiger* steamer, about four months ago, which trades between Hull and Hamburg. I think it was a bolt that gave way. The leak was stopped with a wooden plug, and we proceeded on our voyage. I have seen steam boilers that have lasted for five years."

Mr. Just was so much encouraged by this further inquest, Tulloch's evidence having been completely in his favour, that he asked for a further adjournment of the inquest.

He returned to Bamburgh for the third meeting with a body of witnesses who could prove the verdict of the first jury was completely wrong. He was met with the greatest politeness *and strict attention to the matter in hand*. The Coroner was ready to receive any evidence about the death of the fireman, Douthy. Anything irrelevant (such as the state of the *Forfarshire's* boilers) could not be considered. Mr. Just had been forewarned, apparently, since his arrival. He saw the position and that there was nothing for it but to accept it. Mr. Smeddle was punctiliously desirous that Mr. Just should be satisfied about the cause of Douthy's death.

The accounts that followed, appeared in the Berwick papers the following Friday and Saturday, but do not appear to have been quoted by any other papers.

#### ADJOURNED INQUEST ON THE BODY OF WILLIAM DOUTHY.

"The jury impanelled to inquire into the death of Wm. Douthy, one of the firemen on board the *Forfarshire* met again on Monday last. After the jury had answered to their names the Coroner (A. T. Russell, Esq.) said that if there was any further evidence touching

the death of the deceased the jury would be very happy to receive it. The adjournment had taken place at the request and for the satisfaction of Mr. Just and that gentleman being now present, the jury were prepared to receive any evidence he had to give them.

"Mr. Just.—The evidence I have brought with me has no reference to the death of Douthy, and as it has, since I reached this place, been represented to me that any other evidence would be unnecessary, I have no wish that the inquest should be further continued.

"Mr. Smeddle (foreman of the jury).—If Mr. Just is satisfied, we are quite prepared to enter upon the consideration of our verdict, being of opinion that we have had sufficient evidence to account for the death.

"Mr. Just.—I have no further desire upon the subject. The evidence I am in possession of does not go into the death at all.

"The Coroner then desired strangers to withdraw, and the jury, having been closeted for about ten minutes, agreed to a verdict to the purport that the deceased had been casually and accidentally drowned when on the high seas on board of the *Forfarshire* steamer, *which vessel was wrecked in consequence of tempestuous weather*.

"Mr. Just here stated that he had been surprised to find that the evidence taken at the last meeting of the present inquest had been reported in the *Warder* newspaper. He was the more surprised at this time when he recollected that he was denied a copy of that evidence, in consequence of the jury having unanimously resolved that that evidence should be suppressed until the inquest was concluded. The evidence there reported was inaccurate and the object the Company had in view in prolonging this inquest frustrated thereby. Mr. Smeddle said he had communicated with the *Warder* on the matter of the inquest, but he did not consider himself responsible for all that had therein appeared."

The *Warder* summed up the Coroner's refusal to hear Mr. Just's witnesses so naively, it is worth reprinting also.

"Adjourned inquest at Bamburgh.—On Monday last the inquest on the body of William Douthy, fireman of the *Forfarshire*, which had been adjourned from Monday, the 1st inst., was held by T. A. Russell, Esq., Coroner, at the house of Hugh Ross, Bamburgh. Mr. Just, manager of the Company at Dundee, attended with several witnesses, whom he had brought to give evidence as to the sufficiency of the vessel's boilers, but the Coroner, *not wishing to disturb the general verdict given on the bodies of the other sufferers*, declined taking their evidence, and, after a brief consultation, brought in a verdict of accidental death."

The further inquest was as long drawn out in proportion to its unimportance, as the first inquest had been hurried through, in proportion to its importance. But *was* the further inquest unimportant? The

verdict of the further inquest had completely reversed the verdict of the first inquest.

Why was no attention given to this second verdict? Because people interested in the Dundee Packet Company knew by now that Mr. Just had more or less cleared his Company, and the Press did not consider the verdict of the further inquest of sufficient interest to be reported. It was an anticlimax—stale news.

*And in consequence of this, all Grace Darling's biographers have chronicled the verdict of the first inquest only, and not of the further inquest.*

The merest paragraphs appeared next week to say that Donovan and Mrs. Dawson had left Bamburgh for Hull. Mr. Radford, the leading coach proprietor of Newcastle, generously conveyed them all the way free of charge. On their departure, one or two inhabitants, seeing their plight, generously began a subscription in their favour, which in the course of two hours amounted to £11 8s.

The wreck was broken up and gone, the receipts therefrom having amounted to no less than £500. The stage was cleared for the leading lady—

Grace Darling, HEROINE.

**PART THREE**  
**HER FAME**

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

### ARTISTS :

ROBINSON ELLIOTT,	South Shields.
DAVID DUNBAR.	
ROBERT WATSON,	Newcastle-on-Tyne.
JOHN REAY.	
HENRY PERLEE PARKER.	
JOHN WILSON CARMICHAEL.	
JAMES SINCLAIR,	Berwick-on-Tweed.
EDWARD HASTINGS,	Durham.
MR. ANDREWS	} Edinburgh.
MISS M. G. LAIDLER	
CHEVALIER D'HARDVILLIER	
THOMAS MUSGRAVE JOY,	London.
GEORGE HARRISON,	Leeds.
G. COOK.	
WILLIAM BELL SCOTT.	

### PANORAMA :

ROBERT BARKER.	MR. JOHN DENNETT.
CAPTAIN GEORGE W. MANBY.	CHARLES DICKENS.

### POETS :

MISS ELIZABETH YOUNGHUSBAND.	WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.
T. WHITE.	ALGERNON SWINBURNE.
W. D.	HON. H. T. LIDDELL, M.P.
WILL H. OGILVIE.	

### ADMIRERS :

LORD OSSULSTON.	MR. AND MISS GORDON, of St. Petersburg.
LORD FREDERICK FITZCLARENCE.	SIR FRANCIS AND MISS BURDETT-COUTTS.
JAMES ANDERSON, of Arbroath.	MISS CATHARINE SINCLAIR.
MRS. STERLAND, of Smenton.	THE LADIES OF EDINBURGH.
REV. R. PICKERING.	MR. BATTY.
MR. JAMES AYTOUN, of Kirkcaldy.	LLOYD'S.
MR. WILKIE, of Ladythorne.	MR. SCAFE.
MISS L. J. PERCY, of Alnwick Castle.	JOHN EMBLETON.
THE DUCHESS OF SUTHERLAND.	THOMAS MADDISON.
MESSRS. HUBBACK, of Berwick-on-Tweed.	

### THE ROYAL HUMANE SOCIETY :

THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON (President), Master of the Corporation of Trinity.	
DR. BENJAMIN HAWES (Founder).	SIR STEPHEN GASSELEE (Vice-President).
BERKELEY WESTROPP (Treasurer).	JOHN ALSTON (President, Glasgow Branch).

### NATIONAL INSTITUTION FOR LIFESAVING :

ROBERT PLUMMER (Newcastle).

### DUCESS CHARLOTTE'S CIRCLE :

DUCESS CHARLOTTE FLORENTIA, Third Duchess of Northumberland.	
ROBERT CLIVE, Baron of Plassey.	LORD JOHN RUSSELL.
EDWARD, FIRST EARL OF POWIS.	LORD GREY.
LADY LUCY HERBERT.	THE DUCHESS OF KENT.
THE HON. R. T. AND MRS. LIDDELL.	PRINCESS VICTORIA.
FLORENTIA LIDDELL.	THE BISHOPS OF LONDON AND LINCOLN.
MR. ATHEY, of Alnwick.	THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY.
THOMAS GREVILLE.	E. D. BLACKBURN, Barrister-at-Law.
SIR WALTER SCOTT.	MISS BLACKBURN.

### AND ALSO :

SAMUEL PEAL.	REV. MITFORD TAYLOR.
CHARLES MACKINTOSH.	W. HEADLAM, Mayor of Newcastle.
THOMAS HANCOCK.	MRS. CRAGGS, of Hull.
THOMAS BROWN.	



GRACE HORSLEY DARLING

By John Reay.

(In the dress in which she went out to the wreck.)

*Lent by Gilbert Park, J.P.*





## CHAPTER TWENTY

### GRACE DARLING—HEROINE

**G**RACE DARLING was our first national heroine. Up to her time, no woman had ever caught the popular imagination, except Elizabeth ; she gained her hold on the public by reason of her Queenship, Grace rose from the ranks, overnight, as it were, and aroused an enthusiasm which has never been surpassed—if equalled.

"The very name is provocative. Were two such words ever before combined to form a name?—the one expressing the natural quality of the bearer of it, and the other defining what her deeds have made her in the regard of others."<sup>1</sup> When the reporters went out to the lighthouse there she was—a darling ! No other word so well expressed her.

She embodied all the qualities we most value and which are most typical of our race. Reserve, self-respect, a love of law and order, practical unsentimental kindness, courage, cheerfulness and modesty. Her background was picturesque, her position fascinating, her deed unique.

The courage was unique, but her motive was even more so. There was no hope of reward, no promptings of emulation or achievement ; Grace freely offered her life for people she had never seen before and would never see again.

A fortnight after the wreck, *The Times* came out with an article that placed Grace definitely in the position she has ever since occupied ; our national heroine.

"It is impossible to speak in adequate terms of the unparalleled bravery and disinterestedness shown by Mr. Darling and his truly heroic daughter, especially so with regard to the latter," began *The Thunderer*, and ended, "Is there in the whole field of history, or of fiction even one instance of female heroism to compare for one moment with this?"

The Press united in the verdict. A flood of articles appeared, analysing why Grace was unique in her claim on history.

Has anyone replaced her ? Her name is still known throughout the country ; go into the humblest home, into school, factory, or mansion, and people will light up at her memory. How many of our recent heroines in the fields of aviation, travel, sport, are as universally known within a decade of their famous deeds, in spite of the marvellously

<sup>1</sup> *Monthly Chronicle*.

improved means of communication ? They respond to, welcome, and invite the tributes and applause of the world with eager joy, but their courage is paid for liberally and then the account is wiped from memory. Grace Darling's deed is still regarded as something sacred for which humanity owes, and can never sufficiently repay its debt of gratitude. Other heroines receive their meed ; some do not receive it and bear humanity a grudge ; Grace never felt men owed her anything. She never thought of herself in connection with her deed ; her troubles came from the fact that the world thought of little else.

Just in the same way as the world found in Lindbergh its perfect conception of a hero, so did Grace fulfil the ideals of her age. The arc-light of fame suddenly blazed into the inmost recesses of a humble interior, and showed Grace undisturbed and unafraid, performing her duties in a completely natural fashion, cheerful and contented in her lonely lot, charming to look at, sweet-voiced, sweetly spoken ; affording a picture to treasure and delight in.

If the deed that raised her to the crest of fame was marvellous, how surprising and refreshing to find in Grace perfect normality. She was everybody's darling : the rich admired her contentment with her lot, the workers loved her because she was one of them. The very reporters found in their reception unmistakable simplicity and kindness. They came back and told their story :

" Upon the wreck we met Tulloch. He is stationed—in charge of the wreck, being provisioned from Longstone Island—where he sleeps at night. Old Darling was waiting off in his boat to take the carpenter to this island. We went together and as we approached the lighthouse, the heroine, Grace Darling herself, was descried high aloft, lighting the lamps, whose revolving illumination has warned so many an anxious mariner of the rocks and shoals around. At the side where we alighted, a bold cliff is to be ascended ere you reach the lighthouse. Having gained its summit we were soon at the door of the hospitable tower, and received a hearty welcome from old Mrs. Darling and her dauntless daughter. But Grace is nothing masculine in her appearance, although she has so stout a heart. In person, she is about the middle size, of a comely countenance—rather fair for an islander—and with an expression of benevolence and softness most truly *feminine* in every point of view. When we spoke of her noble and heroic conduct, she slightly blushed, and appeared anxious to avoid the notice to which it exposed her ; she smiled at our praise but said nothing in reply—though her look indicated forcibly that the consciousness of having done so good and generous an action had not failed to excite a thrill of pleasure in her bosom which was itself no mean reward. ' Her conscious heart of charity was warm.'

" The Darlings, father, mother and daughter form a most interesting group. They could not withhold their hospitality from us, strangers though most of our party were, and without any particular claim to their attention. We broke bread with them, standing, for our time

was precious, and having received a still further proof of their kindness in the present of a bundle of fish dried upon the rock, for which they are famous, we bade the worthy islanders good-night, and hastened to our boat. After a dark sail of about two hours—not much less, having to take a circuitous course, owing to the state of the tide—we regained the mainland at North Sunderland.”<sup>1</sup>

“We have been favoured with the following extract from a letter received in this town, from a gentleman who visited the Longstone Lighthouse a few days ago.

“Grace Darling, the heroine of the day, was born on the 24th November, 1816; consequently she will be twenty-two on Saturday, the 24th instant. She is rather short in stature, being only 5 feet 2½ inches in height, but well proportioned. Her features are admirably adapted for the skill of the painter, and equally so for the chisel of the sculptor. She is modest and remarkably pleasant in her manners, and perfectly free from the shy, awkward gait of country girls in general, owing, probably, to the frequent visits of gentlemen during the summer season to fish, shoot, etc. And you will be surprised when I inform you, that there is excellent accommodation to be met with at the Longstone Lighthouse, although it stands alone, upon a barren rock, five miles from the mainland. The tower is very ingeniously constructed, and contains a well-furnished sitting-room, in which is a capital collection of popular works; and three or four comfortable bedrooms. These, together with an abundance of good, wholesome, homely fare, together with the very cheerful services of Grace and her parents, render a visit to the Fern Islands a treat of no ordinary description.

“William Darling, the father of Grace, is only in the fifty-fourth year of his age, though he looks much older. His face reminds me of the late Thomas Stothard, R.A., the painter of the *Canterbury Pilgrimage*; and his person of the venerable Earl Grey. He reads much; and, next to the

‘Big ha’ Bible, once his father’s pride,’

he is most passionately fond of natural history. Mrs. Darling is a hale, comely old lady, bordering on three score, and may be found engaging three parts of the day, at least, at her spinning wheel. . . .”<sup>2</sup>

But now comes a strange factor in her story. Strange to those who did not know the circumstances; very strange indeed to William Howitt on his famous visit to the Longstone, but apparently understood by Grace Darling’s own family and by those in her vicinity.

This was the refusal of North Sunderland to regard her seriously. That there was considerable local feeling about the adulation she received, is incontestable, and can best be proved, and in some measure understood, by contemporary reports.

<sup>1</sup> *Berwick and Kelso Warer*, September 22nd, 1838.

<sup>2</sup> *Sunderland Herald*, November 23rd, 1838.

In the *Memoir*, issued at Berwick soon after Grace's death, this tendency to belittle Grace was still strong enough to elicit the following :

"We may here properly take occasion to advert to a disposition which strangers have observed to prevail amongst the inhabitants of the fishing village adjacent to the scene of the wreck, to depreciate the greatness of Miss Darling's deed, by speaking lightly of the danger to which it subjected her. We do not ascribe this to any spirit of envy or detraction, but rather conceive it to be the natural effect of those people's habitual situation. They are persons who have husbands, and fathers and brothers, almost daily exposed, in following their pursuits as fishermen, to the dangers which Darling and his daughter voluntarily encountered. However paradoxical may seem the association, it in reality was not amongst people thus familiarized—all of them in idea and most of them in reality—with scenes of tempest and danger, that the warmest appreciation of such conduct was to be expected. Striking as was the case, there was nothing in it which was sufficiently contrasted with the incidents of their daily life to stir their feelings on behalf of the heroine. It was to

'The gentlemen of England  
Who lived at home at ease,'

and the ladies, nursed in the lap of luxury, whose cheeks 'the winds of heaven are not permitted to visit too roughly,' and who had never known ought of a scene of tempest and shipwreck beyond what the boards of a theatre at the page of a romance might have taught them—it was to them that the idea of a girl, under a humane impulse, voluntarily taking a boat's oar to drift through wind and tide amongst those jagged rocks, came home with electrifying effect."

More than forty years after, the slighting attitude towards Grace Darling was still prevalent. Thomasin Darling knew of it, and alluded to it in the *True Story*. It will be seen that the people of the district, even Grace's own family, did not feel resentment, but understood with astonishing tolerance the North Sunderland attitude.

"Had the exploit of Grace Darling been described as rationally as in the letter of her own father, perhaps travellers would less often have been surprised and offended by a disposition among the boatmen of the neighbouring coast to depreciate it. Their endeavour to lessen the risk and difficulty encountered by Grace Darling and her father is ungenerous and unjust ; but it would be hasty to ascribe it to mean jealousy. These boatmen are familiar with the waters and islands ; they have contended, or at least some of them, with seas through which no man could row with only a daughter's aid, let the two be ever so devoted and courageous ; and when such men see inflated descriptions by the pen, or exaggerated illustrations by the pencil, which attribute to Grace Darling and her father impossible achievements, some allowance for human nature may be made if they run to an opposite extreme, dwell too much on the shelter given by the

range of rock, speak of a lower tide than that which ran at the time, ignore the danger at the commencement and the difficulty of the return, and above all, that what might have been a comparatively safe undertaking for a well-manned boat, was a far different undertaking for a middle-aged man and his daughter of two-and-twenty."

That feeling ran very high at Seahouses, is proved by William Howitt's account of his visit to the Longstone in 1840—two years after the wreck :

"But the most characteristic thing is, that all the common people about, and particularly the sailors and fishermen, deny her all merit. The first person that I asked about her was a young girl of about sixteen years of age, who was going along towards Bamburgh as I approached it. 'Well, do you know Grace Darling?' 'O, ay, varry weel.' 'I suppose she is much thought of hereabouts?' 'Much thought of! Nooa, Grace Darling is thought nothing particular, only (*i.e.* except by those) a good way off.' 'But that was a brave action of hers?' 'O, nooa, there was no danger. It was at low-water; and the sea was quite smooth; anybody could have done what she did.'

"When I arrived at Sunderland, I saw the harbour-master, and asked him if he could point out to me some men who could take me over to the lighthouse.

"'Do you want *particularly* to go to the *lighthouse*?' 'Yes.' 'What, is it Grace Darling that you want to see?' 'Yes.' 'Phoh! It's all humbug. It was that painter chap that made all the noise about her; he knew what he was about. It was a good speculation for him. They pretend to say that Grace and her father saved the nine people from the wreck; they did nothing of the sort; the people saved themselves. They walked across from the vessel at low water to the next island and the Darlings fetched them off when the water was smooth, and when there was scarcely any water at all. I wonder they took any boat, I wonder they didn't walk over.'

"The men who rowed me talked in the same style. 'Ah,' said they, 'these stories may do for them as don't know, but we know too well about these things here.' Yet these very same men they were who told me they themselves had to stay at the lighthouse six days, when they went over with the painter, so that it may be supposed that the sea in a gale is no joke there. . . . My knowing rowers should have amused themselves during the six days that they spent at the lighthouse with the artist, because they could not get back again to the mainland, with walking at low water over to the island, as they call it, whence the Darlings fetched off the people. They must have been much in want of a walk; but I imagine when the water was at the lowest, they would have found it a little too deep and uncivil for them.

"The whole of this detraction is a precious bit of human nature. The people all seem to feel as if Grace's daring deed was a reproach to them, and they envy her the honour and the money she has won by it. But the well-informed gentry say that it was a most noble

action. . . . Mr. Mitford Taylor, the clergyman of North Sunderland, and his amiable lady, and indeed all the gentry with whom I had an opportunity of speaking on that part of the coast, had but one voice in honour of Grace Darling's courage and generous devotion ; as well as of her general prudence and admirable character."

But, it will be noted, William Howitt heard nothing about the lifeboatmen from the men who rowed him, just as the reporters seem to have heard little or nothing about their wonderful feat.

The lifeboatmen themselves, and the inhabitants of Seahouses, kept their mouths shut in true Northumbrian fashion. What they had risked, endured, and accomplished, was their own business. They were not going to pose as heroes. And when tourists came, gaping at the rare show of the storm and the wreck and the Guardian Angel, is it to be wondered at that the people who spent their lives about the Farnes, proudly withdrew from vieing in any way with Grace and her father ? To compete for attention with a young woman, in deeds of their own calling, would be beneath the dignity of men. Besides, the fuss that was being made about Grace, reflected in some measure on their own womankind. Their women were brave and hardy, but it was not women's place to go out in a storm, to rescue people from wrecks. When visitors poured forth their questions, the men answered with ill-concealed contempt for the ignorance displayed, and gave them, as they gave William Howitt, what they thought the visitors would swallow. They had rather too low an estimate of the said visitors' intelligence.

But no rumour, scandal or gossip, defaming Grace's character, was ever voiced. Seahouses was above that.

Did this antagonism trouble Grace ? There is no evidence to show that she knew anything about it. She herself concurred in North Sunderland's opinion that the public was making a fuss about nothing. Grace took the view she had only done her simple duty, such as everyone around her was accustomed to doing.

But not only was the lighthouse removed by its situation from the back-fire of the main—Grace herself was far too occupied to hear, much less be concerned with gossip. If people made little of her, what of it ? She infinitely preferred that attitude to the prevailing one of adulation. She wanted nothing from anyone but to be let alone.

Only a vain nature is disturbed or hurt by jealousy and there was not a trace of vanity in Grace. The local disparagement never reached her mentally ; if any word of it ever came to her, the Grace we know would laugh, or humbly and heartwholly, agree. Her father's concern and therefore hers, was to get justice done to Brooks and the lifeboat crew.

They did succeed in this.

When the artists came flocking, Henry Perlee Parker became the Darlings' friend, and when he painted his famous picture of the interior of the lighthouse with Grace and her father bringing in the survivors, they persuaded Mr. Parker to paint a second picture : " Grace Darling and her parents supplying refreshments to the North Sunderland

fishermen who were nearly lost in attempting to reach the wreck of the *Forfarshire*," and this was the picture Mr. Parker exhibited at the Royal Academy (No. 583) in 1839.

## CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

## PUBLICITY IN 1838

PUBLICITY in those times was rather naive, but I doubt if any publicity agent has waged a more ingenious campaign than was achieved for Grace Darling by quite spontaneous circumstances. The extreme publicity which she received is still a matter of wonder.

Curiously enough, although in the campaign for Reform, the American Shipping Laws and the further steps America was taking were generally cited, Grace Darling is unknown in America.

In 1837, Wheatstone and Cook took out their patent for "improvements in giving signals . . . by means of electric currents transmitted through metallic circuits," but the telegraph was at first confined to railway lines and the first public wire was not opened till 1843.<sup>1</sup>

There were no cables to carry the story of Grace Darling's heroism and its results.

Communication between England and America could only be achieved by sending out fast sailing ships to meet incoming vessels for the news : newspapers vied with each other as to whom should send fastest and furthest until finally ships went all the way to the other countries. Not till 1854 was the Associated Press organized in New York to cover European news. Hence America has been largely dependent on books and periodicals for its knowledge of England in the first half of the nineteenth century, and as Grace Darling's life and deed have never been correctly chronicled, America has never heard her story.

But from the North to the Midlands, Grace had a marvellous Press. Not only were the papers full of paragraphs about her until she died, but editorials followed the progress of the Funds and incited their readers to further efforts. Advertisements of the Funds, with full particulars of places where contributions should be made and lists of subscribers, were published gratuitously.

London lagged, and London was reproved in forcible language. The London Press was devoting space to the progress of the Nassau balloon, and London was warned that if her Press did not devote more attention to Grace, London would incur the charge of inhumanity : it was not until the very end of November, that a subscription was started in the City. A constant watch was held over rumours likely to prove detrimental to Grace, and prompt correctives immediately appeared.

To the Press must be given the credit for opposing the proposal of the Crewe Trustees to invest the fund in an annuity. The newspapers

<sup>1</sup> The first submarine cable was laid in 1851 and the first Atlantic cable in 1865. The telephone was not introduced into England until 1880.



of the period took the very sensible point of view that Grace's youth would make the annuity very expensive and that her character should be trusted.

As it turned out, the editorial mind estimated the situation more wisely than the local dignitaries who later had the handling of Grace's affairs. The Press knew that a girl who could keep her head amidst such adulation, could be trusted to keep her money.

But the public was not satisfied with reading about Grace. At mayoral banquets, indeed, at every sort of public dinner, Grace Darling, the heroine, was the toast of the hour. Sometimes it was an official toast, sometimes it sprang spontaneously, from the toast of The Ladies.

To cite two only, at the dinner after the annual cattle show of the Northumberland Agricultural Society at Wooler (October 4th), when the toast: "The Ladies of Northumberland" was given, a gentleman called the name "Grace Darling," which was greeted with considerable applause; whereupon Lord Ossulston rose and expressed his approbation of the heroic conduct of Miss Darling, remarking that, should the Government not take up the subject, with the view of rewarding her, he hoped that this would yet be done by means of a public subscription.

At the Mayor's dinner at Newcastle, the Recorder proposed the health of "Grace Darling—the heroine," which was drunk with immense applause.

Then there were vessels of all kinds, named after her. Grace was the heroine of many a launching and her name was carried at the prow of every kind of craft to every quarter of the world.

As her personal charms became more widely known, Grace was besieged by letters which poured in from all over the kingdom asking for her autograph. She answered all. She might not have complied so readily, but those she looked up to in Bamburgh, her friends and Mr. Smeddle, agent of the Crewe Trustees, led the appeals. If people required one's autograph, apparently the only seemly and courteous response was to give it. It was a duty.

To one friend she wrote:

"According to your request you will receive a few signatures, but you must not promise them to too many, for I am both 'deed swere and unco ill o'.' Perhaps you would scarcely believe it, I have signed about 110 cards for Mr. Smeddle alone, and I don't know how many to others."

But there were more wearying duties still for a heroine in those days. People were not contented with her autograph, they demanded locks of hair. Fortunately there was plenty of it, for the correct lock was about two inches long and rather thick, tied with a pale blue cord. People applied for locks by letter, in person, and even in verse.

An author, presenting a copy of his novel, *Rufus*, in three volumes, wrote:

"Heroic girl. These volumes take  
For fondest admiration's sake. . . .  
And wouldst thou know, heart-honoured maid  
How thrice a thousand fold repaid  
My humble gift maybe?"

With cheerful hand and heart, unbraid  
 The bands thy modest brows that shade,  
 And send, with three kind words conveyed,  
 One little tress to me —!"

Heaven only knows how many locks Grace gave away. Her hair was exhibited in shop windows, and offered publicly for sale. Her brother, George Alexander, when having a shave in a barber's in Newcastle, was asked to buy a lock by a vendor who was hawking a trayful from place to place. "What did he do?" his daughter was asked. "Kicked the man out o' the shop. It was no hair o' Gracie's," was the reply. The devastation of Grace's beautiful tresses was so great that Britain rang with the news Grace was in danger of becoming bald.

*"This humane and heroic female received a letter a few days ago from a lady at Alnwick, enclosing a £5 note and requesting in return for it a lock of her hair. Several ladies who have recently visited the Fern Islands have solicited and obtained similar tokens of remembrance; and there seems a probability, if the demand should continue, that she will, ere long, have to seek an artificial, in exchange for the natural, covering of her head—unless indeed by the use of Bears' Grease or Macassar Oil she should succeed in producing a regular succession of crops. It appears somewhat absurd to endeavour thus to deprive Miss Darling of her ringlets, but it at the same time shows that her humanity and heroism have made a deep impression on those who are desirous of possessing them."*<sup>1</sup>

"Grace Darling's name is now as well known throughout the island as Queen Anne's; and to tell people of the decease of the one is about as necessary as to warn them of the living glory of the other. Grace is the admired of all admirers, and far it is from us to wish her grace diminished in men's eyes, or herself less a darling than she is at present. But the enthusiasm of gratitude and idolatry is becoming somewhat alarming. Admirers of heroism . . . ask that she will be so exceedingly self-devoted and munificent as to clip from her head a curl—just one—as a token by which her name and nature may be identified and treasured up: just one ringlet—one apiece, for upwards of ten thousand applicants, scattered over various parts of the kingdom, but all linked together by a common sentiment. The last report is that lock after lock has gone, each finding its way into ring, brooch or locket, until

'The Darling of life's crew'

discovers, like Cæsar, that a laurel crown may be worn for use as well as ornament. Really a lock at a time is an extravagance—a hair should suffice; for if ever it could be said that

'Beauty draws us by a single hair,'

it may be said of the moral beauty of Grace Darling."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Durham Advertiser*, October 19th, 1838.

<sup>2</sup> *Monthly Chronicle*.

The present generation is seeing the passing of the age of SOUVENIRS but Grace lived at its apogee. Souvenirs of the wreck went through the country, everyone with its proud possessor shewing it, one of Grace's myriad publicity agents. Darling made an inkstand from a piece of the marble chimneypiece the divers brought up from the *Forfarshire*, which the Fourth Duke of Northumberland desired for Alnwick Castle : easels were made of the wood, boxes galore, even old nails were treasured and sent across the world, they were bequeathed to children and grandchildren, to relatives and friends, to museums and local institutes.

The housing problem has settled the fate of souvenirs to-day, for we have no place in which to keep them, but in Grace's time it was almost obligatory on her admirers to endeavour to obtain some material thing connected with her. There is a photograph extant of her cape almost cut to shreds, to gratify the lust for something to have and hold. The gown in which she rowed out to the wreck has disappeared. Little snippets exist to-day in strange far corners. Curiously enough the possessors of the actual garments, themselves given by Grace and her people as souvenirs, seem to have felt the moral obligation of passing on their precious treasure in fragments to those who shared their admiration.

Another channel of publicity is now closed, except for a very small trickle. 1838 was the age of NICK-NACKS. Then did the sideboard and the what-not (charming and suggestive title), the mantelpiece, the bracket, the little tables and the piano-top display a packed array of ornaments. Grace was used to popularize every conceivable specimen. In the Municipal Museum of Hull she can be seen on an early Staffordshire mug, four inches high, which bears her coloured portrait ; there is an early Staffordshire figure of Grace and her father in a boat among the wreck, with the lighthouse adjoining, lettered Grace Darling in gold, and an iron tidy—the receptacle that kept the hearth free from ashes—with Grace and her father in a boat, in relief, lettered with her name.

Her family tell of shop-windows filled with articles of every kind, bearing her name and picture. Oddly enough, none of these seem to have been acquired by her relatives. Perhaps they abounded chiefly in industrial centres and were not seen in Bamburgh ; but then, the Darling brothers frequented Newcastle, where they had many friends. It is a testimony to the Darlings' dislike of publicity that not a single souvenir is to be found among the family possessions.

But in the Victorian parlour and drawing-room, especially the parlour, in the kitchen of cottage and farm, china, earthenware, glass, and metal, commemorated *The Deed*.

All over the country, Grace met the eye. In the dining-room, she came to sight as one drank one's soup, rowing through the consommé or oleaginous turtle shallows, in the drawing-room she rowed among the fire-irons, and in the nursery she pursued her voyage round the children's mugs—china for the peasant's child, silver for the noble born : Grace rowed round them all !

In 1838 there were illustrated broadsides too, with woodcuts, and a narrative of twelve pages, describing the gallant bravery of Grace,

"together with the dreadful sufferings of the crew and passengers and horrible death of Captain Humble and his wife . . . also a correct list of all the unfortunate persons who met a watery grave, etc. . . ."

Christmas supplements kept her memory bright on nursery walls and screens.

Whole generations were brought up on the entirely erroneous presentment of the maiden with streaming hair rowing desperately with both oars alone in a cockleshell of a skiff on billows mountain high. She rowed through the ages into Edwardian days, and still appears on calendars.

And then there was the inundation of steel engravings, mezzotints, lithographs, woodcuts, plain and coloured, followed by the oleograph.

## CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

### GRACE DARLING AND THE ARTISTS

FOR all the loneliness of Grace's dwelling-place, destiny was bringing many interesting influences into her life. With the young men from Newcastle she had studied, admired, and marvelled at the beauties of Nature: now she was to be the inspiration for numbers of artists, young and old; to be their guide, their patient model, their sympathetic and kindly friend.

Up to the time of the wreck Art had never come into the range of the light-keeper's vision.<sup>1</sup> The age of the great portraitists was over, and the age of anecdote had come; Shee had succeeded Lawrence as President of the Royal Academy.

Lithographs and mezzotints were in their heyday. The pictures of places, people, or events were exhibited in printsellers' and booksellers' windows, with subscription lists for reproductions, whose swelling numbers would be advertised in the local papers, with editorial comments keeping up a running fire of interest from week to week. The publication of prints of famous people or events often reached the news columns.

The wreck of the *Forfarshire* was of immense popular appeal. A wreck was considered an ideal subject for the artist's brush, and a wreck with a maiden in difficulties, was in itself an arresting idea. But a maiden rescuing people from a wreck transcended anything yet attempted by an artist. Add to this, that such an apotheosis of circumstances calculated to inspire a painter had actually happened, and that public curiosity was inflamed to fever height, and the rush of the artists to the Longstone, together with the furore aroused by the painters' efforts, will be understood.

<sup>1</sup> The Northumberland Institute for the promotion of the Fine Arts in the North of England had been founded in 1822, curiously enough by two young men, Henry Perlee Parker and his friend T. Richardson, at about the same age as that of the young Naturalists, the Hancocks and William Hewitson, when they founded their Natural History Society.

But no picture of the wreck would be acceptable without a portrait of Grace Darling. This put the marine painters into a decided dilemma. The stormy sea, the masts and rigging, the rocks, the lighthouse, even, to a certain extent, the sailors and survivors lay within their power, but in addition to pictures of the wreck, wherein Grace and her father might be drawn conveniently small, what opportunities awaited any artist actually at the Longstone, who could provide the public with pictures of Grace and her father, drawn from life ! Hence, painters who specialized in marine subjects, turned portrait painters for the occasion with not very satisfactory results.

This sort of letter poured in on Mr. Darling.

From Robinson Elliott, Market Place, South Shields, to Mr. Darling, Lighthouse, Fern Islands.

Dear Sir,

October 8th, 1838.

As I have heard many express a wish that they would like to have some memorial of one who has distinguished herself so nobly in the cause of humanity, I have thought that a portrait of Miss Darling would be that which was most likely to gratify such wish. I would, therefore, feel honoured should Miss Darling give her consent to let me have a few sittings, for which purpose I should with pleasure visit the Fern Islands, the scene of her heroic exploit.

I would be happy to wait upon you any day next week you may be pleased to mention.

An answer by return will greatly oblige, dear sir,

Yours truly,

ROBINSON ELLIOTT.

That this thought had occurred to others, does not strike the writer. The quotation of the expression herein (" a few sittings ") suggests that the reply we are about to print, was to this identical letter, although Mr. Darling evidently composed and used an answer suited to all who approached him on this subject.

The 17th of October, 1838, William Darling wrote this draft upon the back of the application.

Dear Sir,

Please to acquaint your paper that within the last twelve days I and my daughter have sat to no less than seven portrait painters, amongst which is Mr. Andrews from Edinburgh, Mr. (Miss) Laidler from Shields, Mr. Watson from Newcastle, Mr. E. Hastings from Durham, a first-rate portrait painter, with three other gentlemen who did not leave their names. In this place it is attended with a great deal of inconvenience ; it would require to have nothing else to do ; therefore hopes the public will be satisfied, as they can have correct likenesses from any of the above-named.

Your most humble servant,

WM. DARLING.

I have had three letters to-day, making application for sittings.

The *Berwick Advertiser*<sup>1</sup> corroborates this with a note about the artists who have been "busily employed at the Longstone Lighthouse during the last fortnight in painting portraits of Grace Darling and her venerable parents in various sizes, from a miniature to a kit-cat, in water and oil colours. Those in water colours by Mr. Hastings, Miss Laidler and Mr. R. Watson, and in oil colours by Mr. John Reay of North Shields, several of which were exhibited to a numerous company of visitors at Bamburgh on Thursday last, when all parties expressed themselves in the most satisfactory manner respecting the likenesses of the humane individuals represented."

The Press was exceedingly kind to the artists' efforts, for the Press rightly regarded the artists' work as valuable from a news point of view. The public was so interested, that a reference to a picture, or a description thereof, might increase circulation. There were no photographic illustrations in those days and appreciations of the artist's picture served instead. If the Press had deprecated the artist's achievement, this would have made the reference less interesting, because the accuracy and vividness of the likeness would be impugned. From the published accounts the greatest artists in Europe might have collected to immortalize their subject, but as a matter of fact, most of them were very poor representatives of a poor period of art. Some were amateurs, seeking to gain fame by the occasion. Others, marine painters unskilled at anything but their own branch and not very proficient at that. The chief value of the pictures executed at the Longstone is historical. The Darling family were there, overseeing all details, taking the artists to the scene of the wreck and describing everything to the best of their ability.

Amongst them all, Grace moved, a charming girl, with attractive features whose unusual character the artists discovered when they came to draw her. These were the early days of her success and these gay-hearted Bohemians, with their frank and homely habits, were most congenial company. Grace enjoyed their enthusiasm, their desire for accuracy, their fresh and boyish interest in all details; she found in them the right emotional response to the horror and solemnity of the occasion: they desired to shew the piteous survivors in all their tragic suffering. Grace had to take her part in the affair with her father, but the scene was the chief objective of the artists, and Grace and her family were fascinated to see the familiar rocks, the coble, the great waves appearing on paper and canvas. Grace was needed to give her criticism as to if such and such detail was correct. She had to sit in the boat, and launch the boat: Mrs. Darling had to be summoned to stand beside it. Mr. Darling had to sit and row, and then there were the portraits. One or other of the family was always posing with a group of artists round them.

There was jesting, there were adventures: the artists were light-hearted, enjoying every moment of this fascinating experience, and after the tremendous strain, Grace found sunlight and laughter on the dreadful scene. Happy incidents now were interwoven with the dreadful memories.

<sup>1</sup> October 26th, 1838.

The good-natured artists fell so naturally into the family life : they were fatherly and brotherly, carrying Grace along with them in their atmosphere of jollity. Her spirit of fun had outlet now, and if the younger men fell in love with her, as report has it they did, Grace told them she would never give her heart to anyone less gifted and admirable than her father and for no one could she ever change *his* honoured name—Grace Darling she would be to the end of her life.

One hears her robust common sense in the announcement. She laughed at her admirers as well as with them ; and with those who stayed some time on the Longstone she and her family developed a great friendship.

Twelve of those who visited the lighthouse have been traced :

DAVID DUNBAR (Sculptor)	}	Newcastle-on-Tyne.
ROBERT WATSON		
JOHN REAY		
HENRY PERLEE PARKER		
JOHN WILSON CARMICHAEL		
JAMES SINCLAIR		Berwick-on-Tweed.
EDWARD HASTINGS		Durham.
MR. ANDREWS	}	Edinburgh.
MISS M. G. LAIDLER		
CHEVALIER D'HARDVILLIER		
THOMAS MUSGRAVE JOY		
GEORGE HARRISON		London.
		Leeds.

#### MR. DAVID DUNBAR, OF NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.

Mr. Dunbar was a sculptor of distinction in his day ; he had executed some memorial busts in Bamburgh Church. He made busts of father and daughter, and sold casts of them. His bust of Grace is now in the National Portrait Gallery. While the Press advertised the funds gratuitously, the prints and busts were of course commercial propositions, and the profuse advertisements thereof, gained a good amount of space additionally in the news columns.

This is how an artist brought his work before the public in 1838.

#### <sup>1</sup>BUSTS OF GRACE DARLING AND HER FATHER

Mr. Dunbar most respectfully intimates that he has during the present month, modelled Busts of the above Humane Individuals at their residence, Longstone Lighthouse, Fern Islands, and which are about to be published, and which may be seen, at his Rooms in Oxford Street, Newcastle, or in Villers Street, Sunderland. Finished casts one guinea each. Subscribers' Names received at the *Warder* Office, Berwick. 9 Oxford Street, Newcastle. October 25th, 1838.

The bust of Grace was praised for the way it expressed her dignity and intellectual beauty, the profile being strongly reminiscent of Napoleon.

<sup>1</sup> *Berwick and Kelso Warder*, October 27th, 1838. (Advertisement).

Mr. Darling wrote to a friend at Bamburgh plainly in reply to the sculptor's request for a testimonial.

Longstone Lighthouse,  
October 24th, 1836.

Sir,

We are all very much pleased with the likenesses which Mr. Dunbar has made of my daughter Grace Horsley, and myself, and we hope he may succeed with his speculation to the full extent of his wishes.

Your most obedient servant,  
WM. DARLING.

Mr. Darling regarded the artists simply and correctly as men whose chief concern was to earn their bread in a precarious calling. He describes art truly enough as a speculation. The Darlings did not sit to Mr. Dunbar, or anyone else, from motives of self-advertisement.

The group that follows, were all friends of Dunbar—Watson, Reay, Parker and Carmichael; Hastings and his wife were also at the light-house, but neither they nor the other artists were on the same intimate terms. The Newcastle painters had many links with the Darlings through the Newcastle Naturalists.

MR. ROBERT WATSON, OF NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.

(See Chapter XXIII : Play and Panorama.)

MR. JOHN REAY, OF NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.

Mr. Reay's arrival was fraught with excitement, as Mr. Darling's *Journal* shews.

"Melancholy.

"Oct. 11th. The Northern Yacht steamboat sailed from Newcastle bound to Leith, and after landing Mr. John Reay, artist, at North Sunderland, leaving twenty-two persons on board, blowing then W.N.W. when near Holy Island it came to blow a hurricane from N.W. by W. and after passing the Head, Holy Island, was never more seen. Of course she must have foundered with all hands."

Mr. John Reay also pleased the family with his portraits. The *Tyne Mercury* informs its readers that "the brother of the heroine has called on us to say that he has seen them and thinks it would be a difficult matter to have more striking likenesses."

John Reay's visit had important results, as will be seen by the following letter.

4 Lower Brunswick Terrace,  
Barnsbury Road, Islington,  
London.

Dear Sir,

September 2nd, 1839.

When I left your hospitable sea-girt dwelling last Autumn I expected I should before this time have had another opportunity of visiting it. In the early part of the year I left home for this great city intending



to stay about three months. After I arrived here I found that the opportunities for studying my profession were much greater in Paris than here. To France then I immediately set off and there I have been all the summer. This I trust will be some excuse why I have not sent you down paintings of your heroic girl and yourself as I had fully intended doing when I left you. Before leaving home I sent a few prints which I hope you received safe and approved of.

In Paris I had the pleasure of meeting a young gentleman, very eminent in his profession of an artist, who informed me he intended to paint the subject of the wreck of the *Forfarshire*, by which the heroic exertions of your daughter and you have gained you imperishable names. Mr. Joy is the name of the artist and I take advantage of this seeing you to forward this hasty scrawl. The picture he intended to paint is for a nobleman (Lord Panmure) who I believe took great interest in and subscribed liberally to the "Darling Fund." I told Mr. Joy I was sure that both Grace and yourself would do all you could to assist him in his object which I can assure you he is fully able to execute in a very superior manner. He will want all information on the subject, also to be favoured with sittings for your portraits.

It is very probable I will remain here till the winter so that I shall not have an opportunity of seeing you this year. I live in hopes of another summer finding me at home when I will not fail to enjoy myself by visiting your romantic isle.

Will you please remember me in something more than a complimentary way to Mrs. Darling, to your daughters Grace and Thomasin, in fact to all the members of your family with whom I have the pleasure of being acquainted, and believe me to be,

Yours most sincerely,

J. REAY.

MR. HENRY PERLEE PARKER, OF NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.

MR. JOHN WILSON CARMICHAEL.

The best of the paintings are those by Henry Perlee Parker, portrait and marine painter, of Newcastle, born in 1795, who had come North from Plymouth, when he was twenty-one. He was already known to the Darlings through their friend Henry Hewitson of Seaton Burn, who had commissioned a picture of a party embarking for a cruise at Cullercoats, which included striking portraits of himself, Mr. Brandting, Mayor of Newcastle, and others.

Parker brought letters of introduction from the great friends of William Hewitson, Henry Hewitson's nephew—Albany and John Hancock.

From Albany Hancock, Naturalist, Newcastle, to Wm. Darling, Longstone.

November 6th, 1838.

I beg to introduce to you the bearer, my friend Mr. Parker, an eminent artist of this place. He comes a pilgrim to your barren islands

to witness the scene of the unfortunate wreck of the *Forfarshire*, but more particularly to pay a visit to yourself and daughter whose brave conduct on that occasion is the admiration of the whole kingdom.

I would not have troubled you with this note as Mr. Parker will bring a letter from my brother, but I was afraid he might have neglected to say that that gentleman is a friend of ours, and that any kindness shown him will be esteemed a favour.

I am, Dear Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

ALBANY HANCOCK.

Mr. Parker had a friend, James Wilson Carmichael, a marine painter of great reputation. Born at Newcastle in 1800, he was brought up amidst shipping, and one of his earliest pictures, "Admiral Collingwood at the Battle of Trafalgar," was placed in Trinity House at Newcastle. Parker was known as Smuggler Parker, on account of his fondness for this type of mariner; but his speciality was figures, whilst Carmichael's was maritime landscape. The storm, the Harkers, and the billows called for the brush of an expert. Consequently these artists decided to join forces.

Messrs. Carmichael and Parker seem to have collected as many letters of introduction from their friends as possible. They appear to have met Mr. Dunbar the sculptor at North Sunderland, who added the following note to the ones from Mr. Hancock and his brother:

From D. Dunbar, North Sunderland, to William Darling, Longstone.

November 7th, 1838.

Dear Sir,

The bearer, Mr. Carmichael, is my very intimate friend, and the artist who wrote to me while I had the pleasure of sojourning at your residence, and who made the drawings which are about to be published for the "Darling Fund."

Pray show him and our friend Mr. Parker all the kindness you were wont to shew to me and my companions Watson and Reay and you will again oblige me much. Remember me kindly to Mrs. Darling, Grace and Brooks, and believe me very gratefully yours,

D. DUNBAR.

(Written on back of letter). P.S. I should have told you that Messrs. C. and P. are two of the most eminent artists in the North of England and moreover two capital fellows into the bargain.

The drawings referred to, were two water colours of the voyage to and from the wreck, which some gentlemen of Leeds had commissioned. Lithographs of them were sold at a guinea each, for the Fund. These were perhaps the most legendary of any representations of the Deed. The survivors are shewn beneath an enormous ship reclining on its side on a tiny rock. In the foreground is Grace, standing to her oar over the stern, a short skirt about her knees. She has short hair something like

an Eton crop, but a back view only is presented. Old Darling in a little sleeveless jacket over rolled-up white sleeves and white duck knickers, is pulling one oar hard. In "The Return," the nine survivors who include four seated comfortably *in the prow*, are still conducted home by Grace, front view, plying her oar across the stern, while her father rows the whole boat load with one oar. They have assistance now, however, one sailor amiably grasping Grace's oar with his left hand, while the sailor in front of old Darling performs a like service for him. One sailor is being sick, another leans his arms pensively on the rudder, unshipped across the side, and another has collapsed just under Mr. Darling's left arm, which will inevitably push him off into the sea in the next few seconds.

Mr. Dunbar's letter explained that these were painted before Mr. Carmichael's visit, and the two friends achieved very different results in their great picture painted under the Darlings' directions.

In this, Grace is seen grasping an oar amidships with her father beside her, but she is bonnetless, while in the interior of the lighthouse picture her bonnet is pushed back from her forehead. The artists obviously desired Grace's face to be seen clearly. Moreover, the public would expect a wildness which a bonnet might nullify. A certain amount of poetic licence was not only granted, but expected. The exploit had to look as dangerous and desperate as possible.

The artists left with a friendship started that was to endure. Mr. Parker's next letter shews the cordial relations that existed. "Saburn" is the boatman whom, it will be remembered, Henry Hewitson referred to when seeking someone sufficiently responsible to row Mrs. Hewitson to the lighthouse.

A point of interest in the picture of the inside of the lighthouse to which the next letter refers, is the peculiar position given to Donovan, the man whose testimony was so unjustly defamatory to the owners of the *Forfarshire*. While all the other figures are in light, Donovan is the one patch of darkness. He is seated in the most prominent spot, more conspicuous than any of the Darlings, high up by the fireplace with his shadowed hand extended to the flames while he surveys the room.

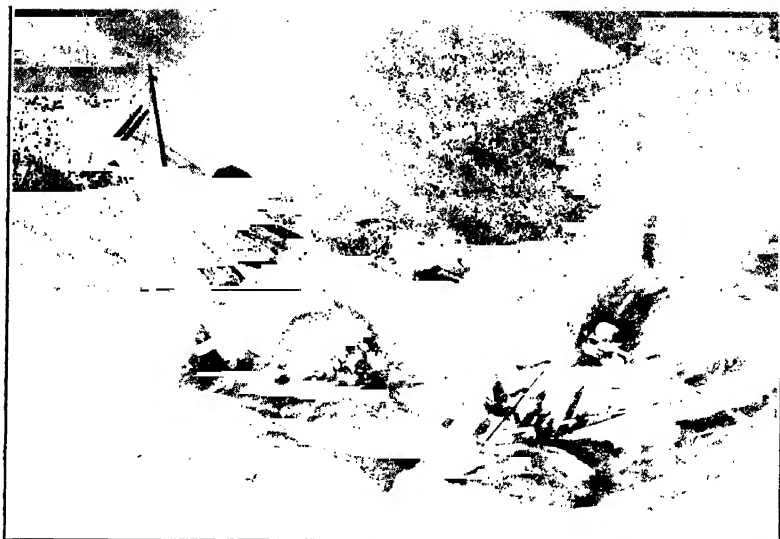
Miss Norraby, the artist's grand-daughter, is under the impression he painted two pictures of the interior of the lighthouse. Brooks, then unmarried, had become a great friend of Mr. Parker's: and the artist appears to have painted a replica of the interior, with a new set of figures entitled, "The Darlings supplying refreshment to Brooks and the Lifeboat Crew."

From H. P. Parker to Wm. Darling.

51 Blackett Street,  
Newcastle-on-Tyne,  
November 24th, 1838.

My Dear Sir,

As I have not yet received the piece of the wreck which you promised to give in the charge of the Captain of a Sloop that would leave Sunderland—I begin to fear that I shall not get it; might I trouble



### THE RESCUE

By J. Wilson Carmichael (before visiting the scene).



you to write me word what was the name of the vessel you sent it by that I may find her out when she arrives in Shields or Newcastle. I should be indeed sorry if it does not reach me.

I trust this will find you, Mrs. Darling and Miss Grace, hearty and well, also friend Brooks. I suppose you have heard that I am proceeding with a picture of the inside of your house, which I think will be a fine picture, every person seems much pleased with the likenesses I have taken ; Mr. Hewitson called a day or two ago after my return and was so much pleased that he is going to have a copy of your likeness done to correspond with the one I did of Saburn. Your likeness to hang on one side and Saburn's on the other of his own—he spoke as kindly of you as you did of him. I am sorry to see that poor Mrs. Hewitson's death has such an effect upon him, but it is what might be expected. He has just gone to the South where he will remain some time. Your son who is with Mr. Grainger called to see your likenesses and thinks they are the best, he says those that are done by Hastings are nothing but, as he calls it "*fair nonsense*." I wish you could give us a look in to see the pictures that Carmichael and I are doing, I hope they will sell and enable us to add something to the list of subscribers for you all.

I beg my kindest respects to Mrs. Darling whose kindness to me I shall never forget and which I often tell my friends of. I assure you I quite long to come and see you again, which I hope to do if please God I live next summer, as I wish to paint the fine staple rocks.

To Miss Grace be pleased to remember me, tell her I have been as good as my word and had my little baby christened *Grace*, after her, which will serve to keep her in remembrance, my daughter sends her love to her and thanks her for the few lines she wrote and hopes you will come and see us all soon, as I dare say she would like to see our pictures of the subject she is so interested in. I often think of the nice rabbit dinners I had with you. "Rabbits hot, Rabbits cold &c."

Please to give my respects to friend Brooks whose civility and good nature to me I am obliged by, please to tell him that I often look at the views I did of the barracks but I have not gone quite mad yet.

Now my dear Sir, I must beg your pardon for troubling you, but as I am so desirous to possess that piece of the wreck I cannot avoid writing about it as I dare say you will be as vexed as I am if it does not reach me safely and I will thank you to make enquiry about it.

I remain Dr. Sir,

Yours truly, &c.,

H. P. PARKER.

P.S. Mr. Carmichael and myself are getting some books together which we mean to send as a present to you very soon.

I should like to know if you have had any artists to see you since I left and what are their *names*. Please to let me know this as it is of consequence to me.

Mrs. Parker desires me to thank you for your goodness to me while I was with you. She would be glad of an opportunity to repay the

kindness if any of you will come and take pot luck with us in a family way for a few days—do try.

I am informed this is Grace's birthday, I wish her many happy returns, and happier years, in store, God grant it.

Apparently the books were sent by Mr. Carmichael, for Mr. Darling sends his acknowledgments to that gentleman.

William Darling to J. W. Carmichael.

December 27th, 1838.

Dear Sir,

I received yours to-day with a valuable lot of books, which I have no doubt will bid defiance to many a solitary hour ; for which I beg to return you my most sincere thanks. I have not had time to overhaul them yet but I see you have not forgot that Histories, Voyages and Travels is favourites of mine. I feel myself so much your debtor that I am at a loss how to make an acknowledgment, but must remain for the present,

Your very much obliged, humble Servant,

All well.

WILLIAM DARLING.

J. W. Carmichael, the artist, was on sufficiently intimate terms with the Darlings at the beginning of 1840 to ask W. Darling if he would take a young Newfoundland dog to train for his friend Mr. William J. Forster. Mr. Darling, according to the draft of the reply sent which is written on the back of Mr. Carmichael's original letter, said he could not do this as the house he lived in was "not like one's own." There had been some grumbling once before and, he added, "I can make signal any day for provisions or water for myself and family but not for Dogs." He concludes—

I wish again to thank you for the books you sent and assure you they have assisted us to pass many agreeable evenings when my friend is puzzling his brains with the pencil.<sup>1</sup> I see by the papers you are getting on very fair and be assured no better than (is) sincerely wished by your

Most Obt.

WM. DARLING.

Answered Feb. 23.

Mr. Parker then sent a description of a visit to London, and referred to Grace's proposed visit to Newcastle. He had been told she had actually visited Gateshead. (As will be seen, this was untrue.)

51 Blackett Street,

Newcastle,

Saturday, April 6th, 1839.

H. P. Parker to Wm. Darling.

My dear Sir,

Mr. Railston of N. Sunderland has just called upon me which affords me the opportunity of sending you a few lines and a book or

<sup>1</sup> This apparently referred to Mr. Carmichael plying his pencil in Newcastle.

two for your leisure perusal. I intended to have written a longer letter but I have not time at present as Mr. Railston is waiting for this. I received the piece of the wreck all right. I expect shortly to be at Bamburgh (some time in the month of May). I am going on a visit to Mr. Humble of Bamburgh with a son of his who is a clergyman—when we intend to take a sail to the Longstone to shake hands with you all. I was in London lately and at the Trinity House with Mr. Herbert and have much to tell you about. I was also a great deal with Mr. Smeddle who is a brother of Mr. Smeddle of Bambro., and had a great deal of talk about you, but I shall amuse you a great deal when I come to see you. I heard lately that Miss Grace was in Gateshead and I feel quite offended that she did not come to see me. I hope it is not true that she was here without coming to see me as I cannot but consider I must have given some offence which I had not intended. I am much hurt about it. My wife and bairns and my dear little Gracey are all well and sends best respects to Mrs. Darling to whom I hope you will remember me kindly. Hoping to hear from you soon.

I am, My Dear Sir,

Yours truly,

H. P. PARKER.

Please to acknowledge the receipt of these books.

Mr. Parker took great pains with Grace's likeness in the picture of the rescue.

Like Dunbar, he saw the likeness to Napoleon :

H. P. Parker to D. Lucas, 51 Blackett Street, Newcastle-on-Tyne,  
April 26th, 1839.

Dear Sir,

I feel much obliged by the great improvement you have made in the portraits of Grace Darling and her father since the first proof, at present there are a few things which if attended to will considerably add to the likeness and I trust you will be able to accomplish them. . . . There is a compressed expression of the mouth which is very peculiar to Grace Darling, almost to what is commonly called a (torn off) a firmness of character which is (torn off). There is also a peculiar character about the lower part of the face and chin, in your plate you have not defined the outline and form of the chin. . . . It is somewhat of Bonaparte's character, the little shadow immediately below the under lip going so far in, gives a little projection to the lower part of the chin. I have put a little more shadow on the cheek to give it more plumpness. . . . The line of the jaw might be perhaps made according to my sketch No. 3, and her ear a little raised, as this also is a peculiarity in Grace Darling. I never saw an ear placed so high in a head as in hers. It has been remarked by many. . . .

Believe me, Dear Sir,

Yours very respectfully,

H. P. PARKER.



Mr. Parker appeared to have made a journey to Bamburgh to complete his picture, where he stayed at Friar's Farm, which has been in the possession of the Ross family for nearly a century.

H. P. Parker to Wm. Darling.

Friars, Bamburgh,  
Tuesday Evening.

Mr. Darling.

My dear Sir,

I am very wishful to see you while I am in this neighbourhood, but as my time is very limited and I want to get back to Newcastle directly, if instead of my coming off to the Longstone to see you, you could oblige me by calling to see me here it would save me both time and trouble.

I have got the print with me which is very unfinished and I would like to compare it with your face and also dear Grace if she would consent to come with you. I do not know how much I should esteem the kindness but if she will not come to see me I must come to see her, but her coming here would save me much time, and I know she would not refuse to oblige me. My own dear little Grace grows a fine lassie and I must speak for her in sending her love to her namesake.

Please to remember me kindly to Mrs. Darling and I shall ever remember her kindness to me. With best regards to yourself and in hope of seeing you and Miss Grace.

I am, Dr. Sir,

Yours truly,

H. P. PARKER.

I received your kind letter and am pleased to find Grace has not been in Newcastle.

Mr. Parker's grand-daughter, Miss Norraby, tells of her grandfather staying at the lighthouse and seeing Grace and her father take off in their little boat, with old Mrs. Darling standing on the shore and crying out, "Noo then, Gracie, tak care of your faither." Miss Norraby was under the impression Grace could not write, but it seems possible that Mrs. Darling could not, as no letters of hers are to be found nor apparently did she ever write to her children. Mr. Darling was the correspondent. Mrs. Darling was born in 1774. The School at Bamburgh Castle for the boarders was not established till 1793, nor the Library acquired till then, and education would not have been far advanced in Thomasin's day.

A charming little note from Grace to Mrs. Parker is preserved.

Grace Darling to Mrs. Parker.

Longstone Light,  
September 5th, 1841.

Dear Madame,

Please to accept of the enclosed frock for little Grace as a token of sincere respect and wishes her health to enjoy it. We have great

pleasure in seeing that our old friend Mr. Parker is going on so well, by the newspapers, we are all well hoping this will find Mr. and Mrs. Parker and family all the same we all join with kind regards.

Yours truly,

GRACE H. DARLING.

THOMAS MUSGRAVE JOY, OF LONDON.

The best-known of the portraitists was Thomas Musgrave Joy. In 1843 he received a commission from the Queen to paint the portrait of the infant Prince of Wales and Princess Royal, and his Academy pictures, *Le Bourgeois Gentleman*, *A Medical Consultation*, etc., were famous in their day.

In 1839 he visited the Longstone with a commission for the portraits of William Darling and his daughter from Lord Panmure, for whom Mr. Joy undertook also a large painting of the rescue from Harkers Rock. After beginning this, Mr. Joy wrote to William Darling for particulars.

From Thomas Musgrave Joy to Wm. Darling.

4 Russel Place,

Fitzroy Square, London,

December, 1839.

Mr. Darling,

Since I left your hospitable roof I have been so much engaged that I have not had time to write you a line, as I promised to do when I left the Fern Isles. When I reached Brechin Castle the seat of Lord Panmure for whom I painted the portraits of yourself and Miss Grace I immediately made enquiries as to how much his Lordship had subscribed towards the fund collected for Miss Grace in the neighbourhood of Dundee and Arbroath, and Montrose, and his Lordship's Factor told me in about 20*£*. You expressed a wish to know how much his Lordship had subscribed and that is the sum, but I must beg you not to mention it, that it may reach his Lordship's ears as coming from me, as he does these things not for the mere show of the thing, but from that best of all principal "not to let his right hand know what the left hand doeth." His Lordship was much pleased with your kind reception of myself and I left him undecided in what present to send Miss Grace for her trouble and yours and Mrs. Darling's kindness to me. I am on a large picture as I mentioned with you and I have troubled you with a few questions which if you will be so kind as to answer me I shall feel particularly obliged as not being a *sailor* I am not exactly at home with boats. How many feet long the boat is from head to stem, how many wide across the bows? How many *seats* in the boat and if there is a stern seat where a person would sit to steer? Which seat Miss Grace sat upon her return. I think she told me the second, if so and there are *only three* seats in the boat it must be the middle one? If Miss Grace sat facing you, or opposite and if the woman who was saved sat at the bottom of the boat, or had strength to *sit* on the seat beside Miss Grace? If the

two children was in the boat dead, or alive? If the mast was on board or any oars. If the skuls, or oars was used in the return from the rock or only skuls. If the rudder was shipped or unshipped during the time.

If you could inform me of these little particulars of any others you may happen to recollect, I shall take it as a great personal favour, and Lord Panmure will I know do the same. I send you a paper published at Montrose respecting an Exhibition where your picture and Miss Grace's are with some little news besides. Please to give my best respects to Mrs. Darling and accept the same for Miss Grace and yourself.

I am, Dr. Sir, Your ever abled,  
T. M. Joy.

P.S. Did the steamer lay with her head to the wind or did she lay as Mr. Parker has put her head towards the lighthouse? Perhaps you will give me an answer to this at your earliest convenience. T.M.J.

A draft of the reply by William Darling gives a most accurate account of the return journey.<sup>1</sup>

#### MR. EDWARD HASTINGS, OF DURHAM.

The portraits which all the Darling family possess (the one of Grace appearing as the frontispiece to the *True Story*, to Eva Hope's biography and to the Newcastle novel, *The Maid of the Isles*) are the insipid ones by Hastings, lithographed by Corboux, who gives an extraordinary French aspect to his model. Grace is simpering like a frontispiece to a Book of Beauty, except that few Books of Beauty would have published a picture so badly drawn. A little pleated frill has been added to her shawl, with an improved bow of ribbon to her bonnet. Old Darling looks like an emasculated version of Rudolph Valentino made up as a "Sire of Years." A letter from Mr. Hastings explains the prevalence of his prints among the surviving members of the Darling family; it also shows that Mr. Darling was by no means uninterested in the progress of the Funds. These agreeable artists were men of the world and a link between him and their cities, and Mr. Darling felt he could discuss his affairs with them.

South Bailey, Durham,

July 1st, 1839.

Edward Hastings to Wm. Darling.

My Dear Sir,

I have had so little intercourse with any part of Northumberland since my wife and I were at the Longstone as not to have had an opportunity of writing sooner to you to give you the History of the Prints I had taken from the portraits. As soon after I got home as possible I completed the drawings and sent them up to the first Lithographic Engravers but I never could ascertain the amount of

<sup>1</sup> See p. 80.

the probable cost which proved to be very considerable independent of my expenses. The advice I got both at Newcastle and London led me to charge 5s. for the proofs and 4s. the prints on different paper. I found the price too high when it was too late to remedy the mistake; the consequence was, it has been a losing concern rather than profitable.

What I have to propose to you is to allow me to send you a number of the prints as strongly recommended to me in hopes that as you are very likely to be visited by many a boat load this summer many of these might be sold and we will divide the profits whatever they may turn out, allowing you the half of whatever they bring either at the Islands or on shore. I do not think you must put above 2s. or at the most 2s. 6d. each upon them but judge for yourself, when you have an opportunity of trying them. I could wish you not to mention my name as I am fully persuaded that you, or your daughter<sup>1</sup> would sell them much easier as it is entirely for your own advantage and for old friendship's sake.

I would have willingly let you take the entire sale of them to yourself, but that I have been at so great an expense that I ought in justice to myself to cover what it has cost me and which amounts to above £45. I regret very much that the print of Mrs. Darling was so unlike my drawings of her. I have reserved three of the proofs and best impressions for you and which I have directed Mr. Graham, the Bookseller, to forward with 150 of the best prints to the care of Mr. Marsden, be so good in my name to give prints of each to Mr. Marsden and Ross.<sup>2</sup> The package is on its way to Alnwick from London by sea as I am this day informed by a letter from my nephew.

I come now to speak of the small sum that was subscribed for you at Liverpool. I wrote to my nephew in London and I know he addressed a letter to the *Liverpool Mercury* upon the subject, desiring that it might be remitted immediately to Mr. Humble in Durham. I also sent Mr. Humble's *Durham Advertiser* to them then that a list was open at his Banking house in Durham but whether the Editor of the *Mercury* ever attended to these applications I cannot now say. If you never recd. that money I would not hesitate to ask Mr. Smeddle's advice about it for they should not keep it at any rate. With the assurance of our kind regards to Mrs. Darling, yourself, and family, believe me to remain, dear Friend,

Yours very truly,

EDWARD HASTINGS.

#### MR. ANDREWS, OF EDINBURGH.

Mr. Andrews painted the wreck, 20 inch by 16 inch, with an engraving in mezzotinto the size of the picture. Subscribers before publication were charged 5s. plain, 7s. 6d. coloured; after publication to non-subscribers, 6s. plain and 9s. coloured.

<sup>1</sup> Imagine Grace hawking her own portrait! Mr. Hastings did not know her.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Hugh Ross.

## MISS LAIDLER.

Miss Laidler painted the interior of the Longstone Lighthouse, with a family group of the Darlings. An announcement of her intention to have the same published by Messrs. Hugh and Day, of London, appeared with the statement that the list of subscribers' names amounted already to 240.

## CHEVALIER D'HARDVILLIER, OF EDINBURGH.

The Edinburgh papers give particulars of a picture of the wreck by the Chevalier d'Hardviller, "who has twice visited Bamburgh and taken the likeness of the Darlings and Mrs. Dawson and painted the rock, the wreck, the boat and all the localities under the direction of the Darling family ! It is not too much to expect from the gallantry of our hardy unsophisticated seamen, that it will when finished be the decoration of all cabins, lighthouses and harbours," wrote an optimistic correspondent.

## MR. SINCLAIR, OF BERWICK-ON-TWEED.

The frequent records of communications with Russia remind us that the Northumbrian coast was in the direct line of Baltic traffic. Passengers from Russia were on the *Forfarshire*, and when a relative visited the Longstone, he commissioned a picture from Mr. Sinclair.

Mr. Sinclair's picture is of interest as it shews how the people got off the rock into the Darlings' boat.

"In the centre of the piece, the surviving sufferers are seen grouped together on a prominent point of the rock, which is lashed by the sea, and rises in bold relief against the lurid sky ; they are about to escape into the boat, rowed by their heroic deliverers, and which is momentarily buoyed on the crest of a tremendous wave to the point on which the sufferers are placed."<sup>1</sup>

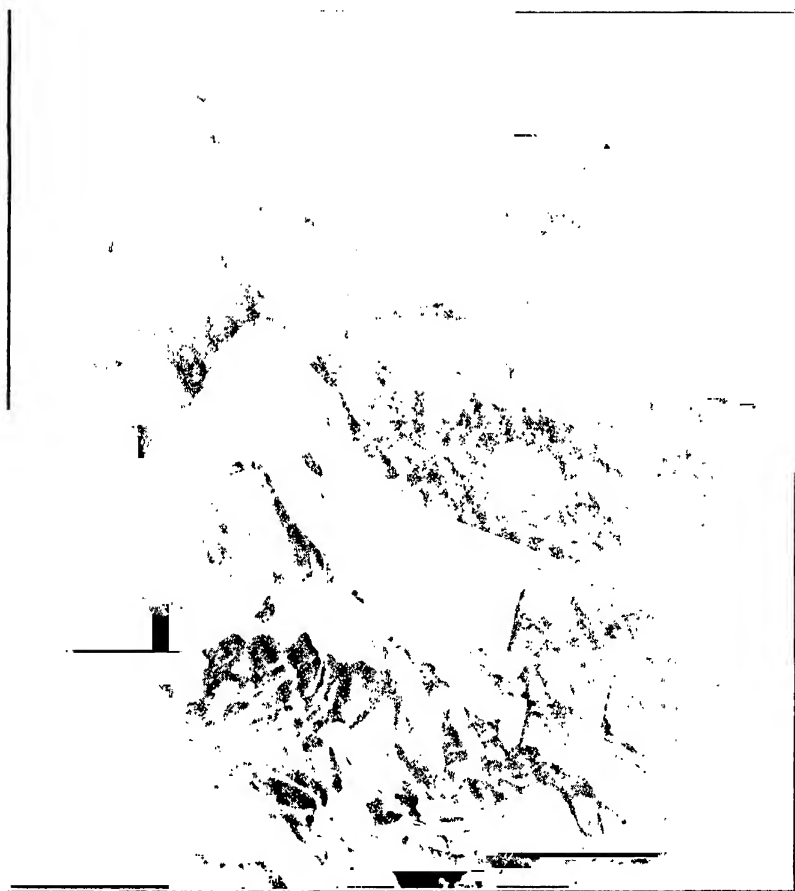
## MR. GEORGE HARRISON, OF LEEDS.

A popular print by George Harrison, 12 inches by 9 inches, shewed a wreath of laurel round the portrait, with a crown of oak at the top and a miniature picture of the wreck below. The likeness is not, however, very convincing.

G. COOK, whose engraving of Grace figures in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, was obviously inspired by John Reay's picture of Grace, with her hair uncovered. The gloomy Byronic expression is certainly not from life.

A picture by WILLIAM BELL SCOTT is of studio origin, the side of a fishing smack being portrayed, against which the survivors have crowded. While the painting is a noble composition, as a representation of the wreck it is of course completely legendary.

<sup>1</sup> *Berwick and Kelso Warden*, October 19th, 1839.



THE WRECK OF THE *FORFARSHIRE*

By William Bell Scott.

*By permission of the Rt. Hon. Sir Charles Trevelyan. From a photograph  
by Lady Trevelyan.*



## CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE

## PANORAMA AND PLAY

THE artists' labours now took a new form. So popular a heroine as Grace was destined to "get into the pictures" even in 1838, for the panorama provided the moving pictures of that day.

A huge cylinder, originally about 60 feet in diameter but later extending to about a hundred and thirty feet, was covered by a coloured picture as accurate as possible, so that an observer standing in the centre of the cylinder, saw the painted surface as he would see a landscape in nature, surrounding him on all sides. The foreground was built up with real objects that blended into the painted background. The picture was lighted from above, but a roof was placed over the central platform so that only the light from the panorama reached the eye.

The panorama was invented in 1778 by Robert Barker, an Edinburgh artist, whose first attempt was a view of that city. He followed this with a view of London, of sea battles, and incidents in the Napoleonic wars. A wreck and a rescue were admirable material, just enough human action and plenty of scope for exciting landscape or seascape pictures.

That December a panorama was arranged by Henry Perlee Parker from his picture of the interior of Longstone Lighthouse, and advertised as THE NEW PANORAMA at the Theatre Royal, Newcastle, to follow Knowles' celebrated play of *The Daughter*. But young Mr. Watson's panorama formed the sole entertainment at the Sunderland Theatre, and was apparently on a much more elaborate scale than Mr. Parker's, two thousand feet of canvas having been covered by the artist.

Mr. Watson's panorama opened on Boxing Day as the Christmas attraction, and Daniel Donovan was engaged to present it, in person, widely advertised as a survivor of the wreck.

The undertaking was at the expense of the proprietors of the theatre; the machinery was by Mr. Munro, of the Theatre Royal, Newcastle, where Mr. Parker's panorama had appeared in the early part of the month. Mr. Wright, music seller, was engaged to provide a band of first-rate musicians, to play a variety of the most celebrated airs for the occasion. "Good fires," it was advertised, "will be kept in every part of the theatre." The prices were very moderate—boxes 1s. 6d., pit 1s., gallery 6d., and children under twelve admitted at half-price. Bills descriptive of the voyage of the *Fern*—this must be a mistake for the *Forfarshire*—and of the heroic conduct of the Maiden and her Sire, were distributed, and portraits of the Darling family, drawn from life by Mr. Watson, were exhibited, as well as Mr. Dunbar's busts. Finished casts of the same were to be obtained from the artist's studio on December 27th, so the arrangement was mutually beneficial.

Mr. Watson evidently achieved success, for a letter to Mr. Darling tells of his panorama going on to Hull. It naively reveals the affection he felt for Grace, and everything connected with her.



From Robert Watson to  
William Darling, Longstone Lighthouse.

Newcastle-on-Tyne,  
Tuesday Morning,  
January 13th, 1839.

Dear Sir,

I am at this moment preparing to go to Hull in company with Donovan, to exhibit my panorama of the wreck of the *Forfarshire*, and was seeing the schooner we intend sailing with to-morrow for that purpose. When I went along to see the captain of the London Merchant Steamer which had just arrived, he informed me that Grace Darling's brother had come with them from London. He had left his ship and was coming back to his master. He had gone ashore or I would like to have seen him and could have given you a better account. I called twice at<sup>1</sup> Robt's house to see if he had got home as I am anxious to hear from the Fern Islands for I have been expecting letters from Grace and you a good while. I expect you got a parcel with a book that I had promised Grace and a letter for you. With not hearing from you I doubt you have not got it. I wish I was coming to the Ferns instead of going to Hull. I think by the time this reaches you I will be in the above mentioned place.

I would like for GRACE and you to see this panorama of mine which has cost me some nights' and mornings' work. You would be worth a whole theatre of others.

If you could see that gull that watched me with such a keen eye on the day we were rowing from the wreck and when I had the misfortune to have on a pair of torn inexpressibles, you may give my compliments to him and hope he may never have such a chance again, bad luck to him, for Dunbar has tormented me about it ever since.

I hope you are all very well and expect to hear from you shortly. My father and mother send their kind respects to you, likewise Mr. Donovan who would like to see you again. By the by I almost forgot to tell you that Mr. Dunbar lent me the busts he modelled to set on each side in front of the panorama. He was very busy himself assisting. I cannot help remarking I thought you looked very sagaciously at it. I cannot imagine what you would do if you saw it in reality. I am sorry this paper is so small.

Yours truly,

ROBT. WATSON.

P.S.—Give my respects and love to everything on the island.

The most important entertainment of this kind, however, was given at the Egyptian Hall, London, at the end of January, when the wreck of the *Forfarshire* was used to popularize and publicize Captain Manby's and Mr. Dennett's live-saving inventions.

Captain George W. Manby, born at Denner, Norfolk, in 1765, was a schoolfellow of Horatio Nelson. In 1807, when he was Barrack

<sup>1</sup> Grace's brother.

Master at Yarmouth, he saw the *Snipe* gun-brig go down with great loss of life. In those days, vessels sank in sight of land without the slightest aid from shore. But Captain Manby remembered, as a boy, firing a line over Downham church. He experimented with a mortar, which was successfully used to get a line out to a vessel in 1808.

Captain Manby was also interested in lifeboats and in 1811 submitted a new model to the Navy Board. He became a Fellow of the Royal Society in 1831, and money and medals poured in on him. He was zealous to increase public interest in the knowledge of life-saving apparatus and hailed the idea of a panorama of Grace Darling's deed as a means of attracting notice.

The panorama was shown four times a day at the Egyptian Hall. The curtain rose upon a representation of the sea in motion, accompanied by the pattering of hail and rain. A man-of-war and a frigate, with all sails set, appeared, and then all the incidents of the awful terrors of a storm at sea were graphically depicted. A merchant vessel came in view, her fore-mast shattered by the lightning, while those on board fired guns and hoisted a signal light, in the hope of getting assistance, but one saw the vessel wrecked and lashed to pieces by the sea, now covered with masts, spars, and drowning bodies. The great efficiency of Captain Manby's life preserver was then shown :

"The reality of the story is fully carried out by the appearance of a boat emerging from the Fern Lighthouse, in which are Grace Darling and her father. After very great exertion they reach the wreck of the steamer ; the passengers are taken into the boat, and, through the perseverance and skill of Grace and her father, all reach the lighthouse in safety," said the *Court Gazette*.

John Dennett, an antiquary, living in the Isle of Wight, was a great admirer of Grace, and sent her a gold and enamel brooch. His excursions into life-saving inventions, although so effective, were quite beside his own line of work as an archæologist.

But panoramas were not enough. A play was written, called *The Wreck at Sea*, for production at the Adelphi Theatre. The enterprising manager wrote to Grace herself, offering a clear fifty pounds beside all expenses for a five weeks' engagement, with the prospect of another five weeks, perhaps more. Accounts differ as to the sum offered. Her remaining relatives think of it as fifty pounds a night, other fairly reliable sources give twenty pounds a night as the figure. All that the proprietor asked was that Grace should appear for a quarter of an hour each night "in a drama founded upon the Preservation of Life in case of Wreck," and sit in a little boat, rowing to the wreck and rescuing the Passengers.

Mr. Darling had been previously approached by a manager of dramatic spectacles in London, who had written him : "I am of opinion that if she were brought out in proper style in London *as an exhibition* that much would be done for her good," and he not only offered to undertake the business but proposed that William Darling should accompany his

daughter to see that "she was properly treated and all engagements fully acted up to."

But the theatre was anathema to Mr. Darling, and the idea of exhibiting his daughter shocked him as much as it did Grace. To be placed on a platform before crowds of strangers, asking for their praise and applause while they watched the spectacle of the wreck, seemed to Grace an act of blasphemy. Someone once asked her how she could think of continuing to reside on a barren rock after having become so celebrated and why she did not come on shore and enjoy the gaieties of life. "Had you seen the awful wreck of the *Forfarshire*," Grace answered, "the melancholy sight would have been more than sufficient to have driven the pleasures of this world out of your mind for ever." Time after time, Grace replied to the flattery and eulogy poured out on her, that the rescue was not due to her exertions, but to the power of God.

William Darling had a position of high standing; he was the head of his family and Grace was his obedient helper in his work as Keeper of the Longstone Light. How could he leave his post?

As for the play that had been written round Grace, she might dislike the imaginary romance about a lover, but she disliked far more the part where she had to go out in her boat, after she had appealed to the lifeboatmen to assist her, in vain! Considering the Darlings' unhappiness about the way the lifeboatmen had been ignored, this introduction of the boatmen in the play, with Grace triumphing at their expense, was too much.

The play, however, was a great success. It was termed a burletta, and received enthusiastic notices.

"At the Adelphi Theatre, London, on Monday night, a new piece, called *The Wreck at Sea*, a dramatic representation of the courageous conduct of Grace Darling, was brought out, with all the appliances and apparatus of scenic effect. Rarely have the walls of a playhouse resounded to more mimic thunder, hail, rain, wind and element uproar, than did the walls and roof of the Adelphi on this occasion. There was enough of each to satisfy the veriest cormorant that ever glutted on the scenic horrors of a modern melodrama. The last scene was excellently managed; the whole stage was made to represent the sea; the waves raged furiously; it seemed as if the pit would have been deluged in the briny conflict of wind and water. . . ."

"Harry Stanmore (Mr. J. Webster), mate of an Indianman, is in love with Grace Darling (Mrs. Yates), and has just arrived in England, at Hull, after a long absence abroad, whither he had set out in consequence of not being able to obtain old Darling's (Mr. Lyons) consent to his union with his daughter. Here he meets with Robert Darling (Mr. Saville), brother of Grace, and Captain of a steam-packet, with whom he takes his passage to his native village of Fern, situate on an island on the northern coast. When arrived in sight of their destination a dreadful storm arises, the vessel is wrecked, but the passengers are eventually saved by the intrepidity of Old Darling and

his daughter, who venture out themselves in the lifeboat, being unable to induce any others to assist them. The acting generally was good, and Mr. Wilkinson very amusing ; but the scenery, and the machinery, which was on a very extensive scale, were the chief attraction, and elicited much applause. At the fall of the curtain the piece was given out for repetition during the week, which was received with great applause. . . . At half price there was a rush to get a peep at ' Nicholas Nickleby,' but ' Grace Darling ' had so filled every berth, that there was nothing but standing room for the friends of ' Dotheboys Hall.' "

So Grace Darling outdid Charles Dickens in popular appeal !

## CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR

### GRACE DARLING AND THE POETS

WHAT a subject for a Masfield ! The convulsions of the elements, the drive and savour of the sea, the intimacy and the roughness of the lighthouse home, Grace in her clinging gingham, the dead and living . . . an epic depending on vivid observation, on knowledge of the scene and the conditions.

And of this knowledge the poets of the age had none : nor felt the need of it. A Cowper or a Wordsworth might dignify the simple incidents of domestic life in accurate detailed description, but even they fell prostrate before any sizable blast of emotion, and such a storm and deed submerged them ; as for the common run of poets with the conventional ideals of their day, detail would desecrate the sublime and turn it into commonplace to their thinking.

So a multitude who knew nothing of the sea or the Farnes sprang into verse, and even those who lived upon the coast, spurned fact for hyperbole and sought to inflate and inflame, to magnify every possible feeling that could be aroused.

The flood that surged around the Longstone on the fateful night was matched by the spate of poems that poured forth round the luckless Grace. The poets tried to exalt Grace above all ideals of femininity, and to magnify her deed into something beyond all existing records of heroism. The dictionary was ransacked for super-words to describe a super-storm. The heroine was extolled as one not a little, but immensely higher than the angels. The voice of the poet issued from a megaphone. Every kind of poet, male and female, lowly and distinguished, sought to clothe so unique an event, and heroine, in adequate words. Young ladies penned tributes in their albums. Obscure residents of villages and cities forwarded theirs to the public prints and all effusions received generous consideration. Wordsworth took the Maiden as his theme, Swinburne, as a native son, evoked the virtues of his county, and endeavoured to excel himself in a description of the sea.

To give a comprehensive bibliography of the poems is impossible ; the stream that issued at the time of the occasion, has continued throughout the years. It broke out in Annuals and on almanacks : in guide books and on anniversaries : in religious and educational publications ; in pantomimes and music halls ; and still an occasional effusion from time to time appears.

Time has evaporated the surging foam engendered and to-day their ebullitions seem the veriest trickle—a few pale suds of sentiment.

The odd thing in this flood-tide of inspiration is that pathos always becomes bathos. The only poems that are exceptions to the rule are, like Grace, indigenous, and owe their being to the poet's love and knowledge of Northumbria.

For the rest, the poems may be divided into the following categories.

### THE PLAYFUL

Of course Grace Darling's name was irresistible. Some bold spirits even included Horsley in their ingenious play or fancy.

#### TO THE HEROINE OF FERN ISLANDS

"What word so endearing to true English ears,  
As that I'm about now to mention ;  
It charms us, it cheers us, 'mid sorrows and fears  
And softens down strife and contention.

'Tis Darling—a word by none other surpast  
In the language we claim as our own ;  
And so 'twill remain as long as shall last  
The renown of the Isle of Longstone.

On this Isle lives a damsel, of valour and worth,  
Alike known to virtue and fame ;  
She's a Grace to the Island that gave her her birth  
And Grace Horsley Darling's her name.<sup>1</sup>

T."

#### ON MISS GRACE HORSLEY DARLING.

"Tho' *hoarsely* she has heard the flood  
Contending with the wind,  
With nought to cheer her solitude,  
Nor to her race to bind—  
Yet she by nature seems endowed,  
Though on a rock enshrined,  
To be the *Grace* of womanhood,  
And *Darling* of mankind !"<sup>2</sup>

### THE POEMS OF SENSIBILITY

Here are some lines from the album of Miss Elizabeth, the daughter of Barthomelew Younghusband, Lloyd's Agent at Bamburgh.

<sup>1</sup> *Durham Advertiser*, November 16th, 1838.

<sup>2</sup> *Berwick and Kelso Warder*, November 17th, 1838.

The steamer presented decided problems to the youthful poetess. All very well to begin in the correct poetic manner :

“ Tumultuous rose the Northern Gale,  
The Sea ran mountains high.”

But how to poetize the new method of transit by steam ?

“ Alike unfit for steam or sail  
Beneath the midnight sky. . . .

She drifted back with wind and tide  
Her steam valves burst or shut  
In hopes to steer her course inside  
The Farnes, through Pipers Gut.”

In common with nearly all her fellow bards, Miss Elizabeth conjured up an entirely erroneous vision of the heroine.

“ Grace Darling on the Longstone lay  
But sleep her eyes forsook,  
All night the blast and driving spray  
The steady Longstone shook.  
She thought amidst the tempest wild  
She heard the screaming of a child.

The father rose and swept the tide  
And islands with his glass,  
Then closed it with a snap and cried  
‘ Why, Grace, thou’rt right, my lass.  
A steamer drifting right astern  
Has gone to pieces on the Farne.’ ”

Miss Elizabeth as one of the famous family of Younghusbands, should have known more about launching a boat in a storm on the Farnes, than this :

“ The man persuaded, loosed the rope  
And forth the coble went ;  
And through the sea’s tremendous trough  
The father and the girl rowed off.”

But Miss Elizabeth was a romantic young lady ; she made a runaway marriage with an artist who came down to sketch the famous coast, and her Gretna Green certificate is still preserved with her album.

T. White, from the little fishing village of Eyemouth, attacked the subject from the standpoint of one on deck of the steamer.

“ Heard you the tempest’s awful sullen roar ?  
Saw you its foaming and terrific rage ?  
When beating on the rugged rocky shore,  
Of ills the gloomy and too sure presage  
To those who on a ‘ steamer ’ trembling stood. . . .”

This was the first time a “ steamer ” had penetrated into poetry.

After “ *Night, sable goddess reigned with dismal scowl, and Danger’s*

horror seemed aloud to scowl," with "troubled breasts panting," "whirlwinds raving" and "billows clashing" for three verses, "while some foresee their fate with frantic Yell,"—"Brave Darling" and "Grace (right-named)" appear.

The author employed a unique expression, descriptive of the light-house (nearly one hundred feet high).

"And now safe taken from the fatal spot  
They soon arrive at Darling's *humble cot*."

W.D., in the *Berwick Warder*, came out with a stirring ballad, in which he deeply maligned the lifeboatmen at Seahouses.

"And numbers eager throng the strand  
With straining eye and outstretched hand,  
But raging waters rush between  
Them and the rock, Death's busy scene,  
And many a gallant cheek grows pale.  
Madness 'tis deemed to spread the sail. . . ."

(Madness indeed with a Nor'-easter beating on the coast in a direct line from the wreck.)

"And will not gold or pity urge  
One boat to stem the boiling surge?  
Vain the appeal . . . they cling to life  
And shun with eye aghast, the strife."

W.D. also was not too well acquainted with the sea around the Farnes.

"One moment, and they launch the boat,  
The next, upon the wave they float."

Like Miss Elizabeth, the poet pictures the boat in the haven, tied to a ring or a stake, although the Darlings are instantly "Hurled like foam upon its mane."

As late as 1910 Will H. Ogilvie was inspired with the theme, and wrote ballad strongly influenced by *The Wreck of the Hesperus*. But all the poets are inaccurate.

"Grace Darling, daughter of Seakings, said:  
'Shall we measure our chance till their chance is fled?'  
Then her hair in the wind and her eyes alight  
'They are men, shall we wait and watch them die?'"

(Her hair was in curl papers.)

"I have rowed to the shore when the seas ran steep  
And the old boat weathered it brisk and brave,  
And, she laughed: 'I was bred to the stretcher's toil.  
If I've dared as much for a load of oil  
Shall I flinch if the waves on Harcar leap  
With the life of a man on my hand to save?'"

The boat needs "three men to man her in rough weather," Grace wrote solemnly to a correspondent, and never in her life did she row single-handed to the Main for a load of oil in any sort of weather.

She rowed to and fro amongst the islands, but it was a good pull to Seahouses. Moreover her menfolk attended to their work without Grace's assistance.

And as for laughing, Grace has described her feelings of horror and distress in innumerable letters. The picture of a dashing and gallant maiden, braving the storm in zestful Viking mood, is about as far from reality as the ensuing description of the sailors clinging to their "broken masts" (they having been on the island for several hours past).

There are some excellent verses :

"The seas broke white on the Longstone Bar  
The gale still gathered from East by North  
As they carried the oars from room to rock,  
And the sun on the ocean rose to mock  
And the wild wind laughed, and the last pale star  
Alone in the heavens looked coldly forth."

(There was no sun, but a thick mist.)

"O, the little wrists they were white and thin."

(Not white, Grace led far too exposed a life for that.)

"But tough as the strands of twisted wire,  
And the rounded arms seemed soft and white."

(Grace wore an inner sleeve down to her wrist and an oversleeve past her elbow.)

"But the clumsy blades were as lances light  
As they dipped to the deep seas, out and in,  
In the sweeping strength of a heart's desire."

(She had one oar and it took her all her time to use it with both hands.)

"A lot of rot," is the local verdict on the poems !

#### THE CLASSICS

But the Classic Poets failed lamentably. Wordsworth's effort is not included in most editions of his Works, although his lines are inscribed on Grace's monument in the chapel on the Inner Farnes.

"All night the storm had raged, nor ceased, nor paused,  
When, as the day broke, the maid, through misty air,  
Espies far off, a wreck amidst the surf,  
Beating on one of those disastrous isles ;  
Half of a vessel ; half—no more—the rest  
Had vanished, swallowed up with all that there  
Had for the common safety striven in vain  
Or thither thronged for refuge."

(No, no, the boat with nine of the crew had safely whirled through Piper's Gut and was well on her way towards South Shields, and no one had thronged for refuge to the sunken half of the steamer, there had not been time.)

Wordsworth continued for fifty lines, "nor ceased, nor paused," until a statement about Thomasin Darling brings up the reader with a shock. He referred to the "noble-minded mother," and informed us



they start "with her blessing cheered." Her blessing took the form of "Oh, Gracie, Gracie, if anything happens to your father, I'll blame a' ye for this night's wark."

Wordsworth was somewhat biassed on behalf of Grace. After doing all he could to portray the ocean's destructive might, he remarked :

"As if the wrath and troubles of the sea  
Were by the Almighty's influence prolonged  
That woman's fortitude—so tried, so proved—  
May brighten more and more."

This was rather hard on the shipwrecked sufferers, when the prolonging of the wrath and trouble resulted in the deaths of the worthy clergyman and Mrs. Dawson's children.

Wordsworth too put everyone into the boat for the return journey.

"With resolve  
That no one living should be left to perish  
The last remainder of the crew are all  
Placed in the little boat, then o'er the deep  
Are safely borne, landed upon the beach,  
And in fulfilment of God's mercy, safely lodged  
Within the sheltering lighthouse."

After this careful but misleading description of the return, the poet's fire with disconcerting suddenness flared up to high heaven.

"Shout ye waves,  
Pipe a glad song of triumph, ye fierce winds !  
Ye screaming seamews, in the concert join !"

The pallid lips of the survivors are exhorted to join in too, with special gratitude for the parental love that reared the prodigy so wisely, so that all together :

"Might carry to the clouds and to the stars  
Yea to celestial choirs, Grace Darling's name."

But Wordsworth was emphatically a poet of the "silent field" and had the landsman's ignorant excitement about the sea. The lines picked out from the hundred or so, in all, to form her epitaph in her memorial on the Farnes, are, however, appropriate and restrained.

Swinburne began as a Northumbrian and sea-lover.

"Take, O star of all our seas, from not an alien hand,  
Homage paid of song bowed down before the glory's face,  
Thou the living light of all, our lovely stormy strand,  
Thou the brave north country's very glory of glories Grace !"

For some thirty lines, Swinburne battled with the dictionary, in the vain endeavour to portray a storm surpassing any storm that ever raged on earth or sea.

"Loud and dark about the lighthouse rings and glares the night  
Glazes with foamlit gloom and darkling fire of storm and spray,  
Rings with roar of winds in chase and rage of waves in flight,  
Howls and hisses as with mouths of wolves and snakes at bay."

We have a "midnight evil starred, dark as death . . . the sea swell scowls and shines, heavens and yearns and pants . . . the night is mad and murderous."

We have *darkling depth and beetling height*. We return again and again to the *ravening hounds of storm*, and the *ravenous rapture of the waves*.

Just as Wordsworth's pen flowed on and on, driven by a flood of emotion, so Swinburne's inspiration prompted him to achieve super heights of horror, until between the reefs, "*a skiff shot out, Seems a sea-bird fain to breast and brave the strait's fierce pass.*"

For another twenty lines or so Swinburne painted anew the terrifying picture of the storm and wreck, before the "*maid and man whose names are ever beacons to the North*" arrived.

"As a pleasure skiff may graze the lake-embanking turf  
So the boat that bears them grates the rock where-towards they strain."

Not a very happy simile—one "graze" or "grate" against the Harkers would have finished the coble.

Then followed an apostrophe of admiration :

"Not our mother, not Northumberland, brought ever forth,  
Though no southern shore may match the sons that kiss her mouth,  
Children worthier of all the birthright given by the north  
Where the fire of hearts outburns the suns that fire the south."

But in vain ; the poet sought a climax which persisted in evading him : he shrieked until he was breathless and then fell into helpless bathos ;

"Life by life the man redeems them, head by storm worn head,  
While the girl's hand stays the boat whereof the waves are fain.  
. . . Back they bear, and bring between them, safe, the luckless nine."

(The boat could only carry four of them.)

We have the *hounds of storm* again, this time *snarling*, so that we may rhymefully hail *Grace Darling*.

"Crowned and throned our queen . . .  
East, west and south acclaim her queen of England's maids . . .  
Land and sea beneath us, sun and moon and stars above . . .  
Sun and moon and stars may wax and wane . . ."

and so on.

The poem concluded with an interesting fact.

"Years and years have withered since beside the hearth once thine  
I, too young to have seen thee, touched thy father's hallowed hand."

#### INDIGENOUS POEMS

The curious fact about *Grace Darling* as a source of inspiration, is the undisciplined prolixity engendered in every type of poet, whereas the chief Northumbrian characteristic is reserve.

The poems that have a genuine ring are those that connect *Grace* with the *Farnes* ; there is a quiet and dignified ode by a member of a

well-known Northumbrian family, the Hon. H. T. Liddell, M.P., whose scholarly cast and exalted vision redeemed it from mere conventionality. Plain metaphor and simple language seem more in keeping with the Darlings' character than poetic hullabaloo. There is also a homely Northumbrian ballad which rings true. These expressed, representatively enough, the voice of the Peer and the Peasant, each with its own dignity, and both together expressive of the county. These writers were familiar with the Farnes. The others portray the maid of the panoramas or Adelphi melodrama.

We give the first and last two Stanzas of the *Ode to the Fern Islands* : inscribed to G.H.D. by the Hon. H. T. Liddell, M.P.

“ Bleak Isles, where piety in ancient days  
Her altar founded on the sea-beat shore,  
And white robed monks sang their Creator's praise  
Amid the tempest's whirl and billows' roar.  
What though no more that desolated space  
Shall sing with loud hosannas to the Lord,  
And seafowl nestle in the sacred place  
Where once the sacramental cup was poured ;  
Yet still upon your rugged beach there stands  
An holy temple undefiled, not made with hands. . . .

Honour to thee, fair maid. For never more  
Shall pilgrim hear St. Cuthbert's island surge,  
And pause upon the melancholy shore  
That rings its victim's everlasting dirge,  
But Memory's power shall bring before his eyes  
The horrors of that agonising night  
And to creative fancy shall arise  
That form heroic with her pinnace slight,  
Who dared amid a thousand perils, save  
Her helpless fellowman from watery grave.

Honour to thee and happiness, fair maid.  
May each succeeding year from hence be fraught  
With blessings due to services unpaid,  
Save by the mead of conscience, and the thought  
That thou, a chosen vessel of the Lord,  
Redeemed and sanctified by Christ, His Son,  
May'st reap in other realms a rich reward  
Approved through Faith, by works already done.  
Receive this humble tribute, nor disdain  
A harp that long hath slept, and ne'er may wake again.”

## CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE

## NEW DUTIES

TAKE up your standpoint in a village and watch the cottage life from hour to hour. You will see in what an even rhythm it proceeds for all the myriad activities of the day. The familiar round of cleaning, washing, cooking, sewing continues; the children go and come; the men return for meals; there is an excursion to the village shop and once a week, to the market town; the week's wash occurs, jam-making and seasonal pursuits; but through all, there is a pervading sense of leisure. The cottage door is open on Nature's quiet round; the sun's procession takes the pear tree in a steady march of shadows; the hens peck up their morning meal, squat in the dust at noon and are about and busy as the sun's heat lessens; there is a constant coming to the door, a shaking out of table-cloths, the laying of odd bits of washing on a convenient stretch of pebbles, the carrier's cart to watch in its advance and hail with a word of greeting and watch again as it pursues its slow departure.

The cottager lives by a routine as fixed and methodical as that of the natural life about her, in which she is a perpetual participant, pausing to refresh herself through instinctive and unconscious communion with the universal rhythmic round.

Thoughts pass easily and lightly through her mind, filled with the small familiar doings of the day: a deep breath of the morning freshness; a moment's basking in the splendid vigour of the sun; a pause to watch the young birds tumbling in their first new flight; with wise or humorous reflections passing as tranquilly as the clouds.

Thus Grace lived on the Longstone, busy, happy, singing, tranquil.

But watch the cottage where a letter comes! It is as if the peace were stirred by a mild convulsion. The sheet has to be read, and re-read, and talked about; and what a process of labour is the reply: something to keep in mind as a great laborious duty for which time must be found . . . not to-day, because of the washing; not to-morrow, because the currants must be picked; not on baking-day, and not on market-day.

Correspondence, even with one's relatives, is stiff mental exercise, and one may well have a letter in mind for two or three weeks before it is accomplished.

This was how Grace and her family thought about letters. Once or twice a month was enough for the closest communication between those on the Longstone and the Main. Grace wrote a bit one day, and then, a week after, finished it.

Grace's life was akin to a cottager's but lived on a scale infinitely more free. Instead of the carrier, a boat might draw in to the haven according to the tide and weather. The sea ruled existence rather than the sun, and the sea had no such orderly routine.

The breeze of adventure for ever blew into the open door; Grace watched the sea-birds, curving, soaring, resting on the rocks or water,

their wild cries were her music ; the surge of the great seas thundered at her doorstep ; when storms arose, she plied her needle or rubbed her reflectors amidst the endless warfare of the waves ; she paused in her labours, awed by the beauty of the infinite azure on all sides, or the majesty of the billows as the darkly rolling tides crashed in white fury and arose again.

Each day was lived amongst the everchanging moods and calls of the sea. She worked in a home for ever open to the air and sun. She was busy, but her heart and mind were always with the larger rhythm of the ocean life.

She thought, but her thoughts vanished in ecstasy or awe. She could not frame in words the feelings that came flooding like the tides, any more than a sea-bird knows the reason of its soaring flight.

Imagine then with all her customary duties to fulfil, the strain of these new duties that accompanied her fame. Suddenly Grace had, not only visitors but a post bag.

If a letter to a sister or a brother was something to think about, and have upon one's mind, and put off from day to day or week to week as a decided effort—what of a post bag with letters and packages innumerable from people of such importance that replies to their epistles must be composed in draft form, submitted to her parents, corrected, rewritten ?

And this not for a season such as Christmas, or an occasion like a birthday, when one could make a special bustle and somehow get through : but suddenly, into the midst of the tranquillity, with no preparation, these new duties of answering piles of gifts and letters, week in, week out, all the year round. Each year grew fuller and fuller of the duties of a heroine. First, the novelty of receiving such kind praise and beautiful presents : then, a growing familiarity with Family Bibles, silver teaspoons and teapots, articles of apparel which one could not possibly wear such as the elegant silver-wrought Cestus ; then accumulating gifts of money which became more and more of a nuisance ; sovereigns and notes and bankers' drafts with all kinds of formalities to go through ; then Mr. Smeddle of the Castle, sending not only silver cups but medals and addresses, which needed hours of grave perplexity as the answers were slowly put together ; and then . . . ever so much more formidable . . . the lawyers to see and write to . . . but that was two years ahead.

In those first days when the gifts and letters poured in Grace found them very interesting.

Lord Frederick FitzClarence (the son of William IV), with the Earl of Errol, paid Grace the honour of a visit to Bamburgh Castle and left a handsome silver cup for her, from him and his lady, engraved with his arms, as well as subscribing to the Fund. Here was Grace puzzling out a suitable letter to Royalty.

"A few gentlemen of Arbroath" sent a locket with an inscription "to mark their sense of her brave conduct," and a note which brought up a new problem : to assure such kind friends the gift was by no means a trifle.

Arbroath,  
December 3rd, 1838.

Madam,

I have great pleasure in forwarding to you a small present at the request of several gentlemen of Arbroath. The inscription on it tells the motives which have actuated them in giving it, and although the value of the gift is trifling, I hope it will not be unacceptable when these are considered.

The favour of a single line acknowledging receipt will much oblige me.

I remain, Madam,  
Yours respectfully,  
JAMES ANDERSON.

Occasionally something arrived which Grace really needed, and then her pen flowed easily enough. When her workbox came, what delight Grace felt as she explored the fascinating compartments, each so conveniently filled ! The lighthouse had always been full enough with the collections and such a big family's possessions, but now it was crowded from kitchen to service room with all the gifts. The workbox made a little haven for Grace's sewing, and she did not need to consult her father or make a draft but wrote off in the full flush of delight offering in the simplicity of her heart the only thing she had to give—that which everyone desired and expected—a lock of her hair.

Dear Lady, January 25th, 1839.

I received your kind present of a handsome workbox from Mr. R. Smeddle that afternoon you left Balmbro Castle, and beg to return my most grateful acknowledgments for the same ; the usefulness of such an article can only be judged by people like myself who have had three or four places to search when a little job was to do. I feel quite delighted when anything is to do now, and an addition would be added if Mrs. or Miss —— would please to accept of a lock of my hair as a memorandum of

Your ever obliged humble servant,  
G. H. DARLING.

But there was a harrowing letter to write to the friends at Nottingham, one of whose inhabitants, Mr. D. Churchill, had gone down on the *Forfarshire*. A collection of presents raised by subscription mostly from ladies arrived from Smenton near that city.

An embossed silver mug for Mr. Darling with his initials and "September the 7th, 1838," engraved on the shield ; for Mrs. Darling, a silver cream jug, inscribed "To the Mother of Grace Darling," and half a dozen silver teaspoons for Grace with a pictorial Bible, richly bound, with the inscription "To Grace Horsley Darling, the brave-hearted girl who, on the morning of September 7th, 1838, thought not of her own life while assisting to save the lives of others, this book is presented by some of her admirers residing in Smenton near Nottingham."

The whole family at the Longstone were sent for to the Castle where the gifts had been waiting for a week : there Mr. Smeddle formally presented them with two very affectionate letters, one from the Rev. Wm. Pickering, Stoney Street Chapel, Nottingham.

Mr. Smeddle felt this tribute called for public notice and sent the letters to the *Advertiser*, which tactfully referred to them. "The great length of these letters (and being written in a strain unsuited to a newspaper) deny us the gratification of publishing them." But Grace's letter to Mrs. Sterland, of Smenton, one of the originators of the presents, was given in full. Grace's troubled desire to reply in a seemly fashion is as plain as her father's desire that she should answer with befitting recognition of her duty to the clergy.

Dear Madam,

I owe the receipt of yours of the 2nd instant which has been delivered to me by Robert Smeddle, Esq., of Bamburgh Castle ; and in reply I am requested by my dear father and mother to thank you, also those other ladies and gentlemen individually for their kind presents ; for myself dear Madam, I am quite at a loss in which way to return you a suitable answer. Had your valuable present not been associated with such a melancholy occurrence I might have said that I am delighted with it—but I must beg leave to say that the awful loss of human life caused by the loss of the *Forfarshire* debars me of that pleasure.

Through you, dear Madam, I most respectfully tender my best thanks to those ladies and gentlemen who have been so kind to me on the present occasion. Believe me, I sincerely feel for the loss you have sustained, but I trust your loss will be your friend's eternal gain.

To the Rev. Mr. Pickering I have to return my grateful thanks for the very kind advice contained in his letter, and I trust by God's assistance I may be enabled to profit by it. May I most humbly beg the favour of that Reverend Gentleman to make mention of me at the Throne of Grace.

I have the honour to remain, Dear Madam,

Your very humble servant,

GRACE HORSLEY DARLING.

Even more difficult was the letter called for by the serious Scottish friends of Kirkcaldy, with the grand gift of a Bible. A gift that, by some terrible slip, had been left unacknowledged, its donors unthanked, so that they had to write again !

How was one to reply to such an inscription ? Many, many drafts of an answer that would be adequate, and yet humble, grateful and yet modest ! Her father could, and did help Grace with this :

PRESENTED to Miss Grace Horsley Darling, by a few inhabitants of Kirkcaldy, Fifeshire.

In testimony of their admiration of her heroic conduct in perilling her own life in the generous and successful effort by which she and

her father rescued from surrounding death nine of the crew and passengers of the ill-fated steamship

*Forfarshire*

Wrecked on one of the Fern Islands on the morning of the 7th September, 1838.

Their gift is

#### THE HOLY BIBLE

In which she may read and admire the lessons of true Christian heroism and their best wish is that after many and happy years she may, through the merits of HIM who "hushed the storm and bade the waves be still," obtain the unfading crown, and the rewards of Immortality.

Kirkcaldy, January 1st, 1839.

To Mr. Jas. Aytoun, Kirkcaldy, Fifeshire.

Longstone Light, Jan. 23rd, 1839.

Kind Sir,

Mr. Saunders having neglected to examine the address it had been overlooked, of course he could not answer your letter. I have to acknowledge the receipt of the invaluable present of a most beautiful Bible for which I beg to return my most sincere thanks, to you and the rest of the Inhabitants of Kirkcaldy who with so much generous kindness enabled you to forward the same to me.

May Our Almighty Preserver grant all my kind friends with me the sanctified use of that Blessed Volume, at present everything that brings the awful scene to my remembrance leaves a degree of sorrow and regret that it was not in our power to do more. I remain, sir, your very most

Obt. Hl. Servant,

G. H. DARLING.

There was an enthusiastic admirer, at Dunse, the home of Grace's grandfather.

Kind Sir,

I acknowledge the receipt of your present of the pilot-coat, *Burns' Poems, British Fishes, Almanac and Useful Man*, for which I beg to return my most sincere thanks,

wrote Grace to Mr. Wilkie of Ladythorne, on December 10th, 1838; but the *Warder* of January 12th, 1839, stated:

"We understand that, in addition to his former presents to Grace Darling, Mr. Wilkie of Ladythorne, has sent her an elegant silk mantle, which was procured from Mr. Wilson's drapery establishment at Dunse."

And on September 7th, 1839:

"Mr. Wilkie, of Ladythorne, in addition to his former presents, has sent to Miss Grace Darling twenty numbers of Extracts, Weatherley's Cyclopaedia of British songs, Views of Alnwick Castle, etc., etc."

There were other books; Scott's *Marmion*, with an inscription



"Presented to (an honour to her sex) Miss Grace Darling, Sept. 2nd, 1839, by William Messenger"; Edward Hudson sent her a Methodist Hymn Book with his kind regards. Miss L. J. Percy, at Alnwick Castle, sent her *Annals of My Village*; Mr. Joseph Richardson, M.R.C.S., of London sent her More's *Moral Sketches*. The list might be extended indefinitely.

There were so many personal presents; a gold ring set with amethysts; a dress ring from M. G. Laidlaw (apparently the artist); a gold locket; a gold brooch; a Paisley shawl, a silk mantle. . . . A Highlander visited her, and having nothing else to give, took off the silver buckle from his plaid and insisted on her keeping it. It was not enough to subscribe to the Funds. People wanted to express their personal appreciation in something Grace herself could see and handle, something that would give her personal pleasure, something on which their names or initial could be inscribed with a tribute to her conduct, as a permanent memento.

Grace was very innocent about the ways of the world; or perhaps she was possessed of a simple common sense which made her glad to help on anyone in the struggle to earn a livelihood. Grace knew by experience that working people had to push their wares. When the Journeymen of Berwick had the enterprise to launch "the Darling Hat" on the world, as a substitute for the "Duchess of Sutherland" bonnet, Grace accepted their gift and wore it and sat to the artists in it. She no more wanted to figure as a public beauty than she wished to appear on the stage of a theatre. So far was any such idea from her, that it would never occur to her that she might be suspected of courting public admiration as a rival to the far-famed Queen of Beauty whose bonnet the world was now to set aside. The "Darling Hat" was black beaver, lined with white satin, and was furnished by the workmen entirely at their own expense.<sup>1</sup>

"We feel a high pleasure in announcing," wrote the *Berwick Advertiser*, December 1st, 1838, "that the journeyman hatters in the employ of Messrs. Hubback of this town have testified their admiration of the heroic conduct of Grace Darling, by uniting their skill in preparing for her a beaver of the best material, and in the best style of manufacture; to which tribute of gratitude the females employed in the establishment have contributed their part by trimming the same in a most elegant manner. The hat is of the finest beaver; black; and is nearly of that shape known in the trade and in the fashionable world by the title of 'The Duchess of Sutherland,' in which a slight variation is introduced sufficient to characterize 'The Darling Hat' as a winter fashion. The following inscription is neatly printed in an ornamental circle within an angular square, in the crown of the hat: 'Presented to Miss G. H. Darling, by the Journeymen Hatters in the employ of Messrs. Hubback, Berwick-on-Tweed; in consideration of her most praiseworthy conduct in rescuing a number of her fellow creatures from a watery grave.'"

The following letter from the workmen accompanied the present:

<sup>1</sup> It may be seen to-day in the Berwick Museum.

Miss G. H. Darling,—The Journeyman Hatters in the employ of Messrs. H. Hubback and Son, Berwick-on-Tweed, in consideration of your most praiseworthy conduct in rescuing (at the peril of your own life) a number of your fellow beings from a watery grave, request your acceptance of a Beaver which you will receive with this. Though but a trifle, yet it affords great pleasure to them to think that they shall in the least degree contribute to the protection of a Head which contains a Mind capable of braving the most fearful dangers in the cause of suffering humanity.

November 29th, 1838.

And Grace replied :

To the Journeymen in the employ of Messrs. Hubback and Son, Berwick-on-Tweed.

Sirs, I beg to acknowledge the receipt of a box containing the Beaver which you so kindly presented me with ; for the notice you have thus taken of me I return you my most sincere thanks.

I am your humble servant,

G. H. DARLING.

A Mr. Gordon and his niece from St. Petersburg, having read of her feat, came all the way to the Longstone, and presented the heroine with a pair of beautifully embroidered slippers and an elegant silver-wrought cestus.

Mr. Gordon brought with him a miniature of his nephew on the understanding that he was to get Grace Darling to kiss it, after which it should not be touched again till the owner received it.

Then there were gifts of money, from a five pound note to a golden sovereign, in exchange for a lock of her hair or an autograph ; how could she refuse, when hundreds of pounds were being collected and the Queen and Lords and Ladies were sending her twenty, thirty, fifty pounds ? It would seem as if she refused small offerings because she did not consider them enough. Grace accepted everything and paid in all the money to the Fund.

But what complications and troubles ensued through the difficulties of the post in bad weather ! The gift of thirty pounds from the Burdett-Coutts, for instance, when rough weather delayed letters so long that Mr. Darling had to send his excuses to the papers.

" Sir Francis and Miss Burdett have lately presented to Miss Grace Horsley Darling the handsome present of thirty pounds. Mr. Darling regrets that the late stormy weather should have prevented him sooner publicly acknowledging the kindness of Sir Francis and Miss Burdett to his daughter."

Grace's contribution to the letter of thanks is very clearly visible.

Kind Sir,

I acknowledge the receipt of yours of the 5th inst. with the inclosed thirty pounds for which I beg to return my most sincere thanks with

<sup>1</sup> *Berwick Advertiser*, March 9th, 1839.

a truly grateful heart. Though not without a feeling of sorrow that we was not enabled to do more but the Almighty who preserved us throughout had ordered otherwise, for not one minute was lost immediately on discerning three persons alive. May the Almighty grant you and Miss C. many happy returns of the season.

Your much obliged Hl. servant,

G. H. DARLING.

WM. DARLING.

There were gifts from the official bodies with which William Darling was connected, and tributes from them were probably valued most of all.

Lloyd's seem to have sent twice, informally and formally. On October 1st, Barthomolew Younghusband of Belford, the Bamburgh agent for Lloyd's, received this letter, and replied to it.

B. Younghusband, Esq., Agent for Lloyd's, Wooler, Northumberland.  
Belford. Paid.

19 Abchurch Lane, London,

Sir,

October 1st, 1838.

A few pounds have been subscribed by some gentlemen—chiefly of Lloyd's—for Grace Darling, the young woman who so nobly and successfully exerted herself in rescuing the survivors of the wreck of the *Forfarshire* Steam Vessel. We are sure that you will feel a pleasure in acquainting us at your convenience in what manner the money can be most easily remitted to her.

We are, Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

CHEAPE AND LESLIE.

P.S. A vote from the General Fund of Lloyd's will probably be passed in favour of the Father of the young woman.

Gentlemen,

I received yours of the 1st inst. and in reply I think the safest way to send the money would be a Bank Post Bill directed to me at Wooler at which place I am at present, and I will pay the money to Grace Darling myself to prevent any misunderstanding.

I am, Gentlemen,

Messrs. Cheape and Leslie,

YOUNGHUSBAND.

19 Abchurch Lane, Lloyd's, London.

On the 28th of November it was unanimously resolved at Lloyd's at a general meeting of the subscribers, George Richard Robinson in the chair, "That the sum of Twenty Pounds be voted to Grace Darling to mark the sense entertained of her heroic conduct in the assistance she rendered in saving part of the crew and passengers of the *Forfarshire* steamer, wrecked on the Fern Islands on the 8th of September last."

<sup>1</sup>Kind Sir,

I am very much obliged to the gentlemen who have given me the sum of 20£, and I hope you will let them know that I feel very grateful

<sup>1</sup> *The Times*, January 9th, 1839.

to them who have so liberally rewarded me, and I thank God, who enabled me to do so much. I thought it a duty, as no other assistance could be had, but still I feel sorry I could do no more. Please, Sir, I will thank you to pay the money into Messrs. Ridley's at Alnwick, in my name.

Your very much obliged humble servant,

Longstone Light, December 28th, 1838. GRACE H. DARLING.

We are told that her father dictated the part of the letter referring to money matters, but that Grace always put in a bit from herself.

What amazing things people wrote to her. Admirers fancied her breasting the waves amidst the elements: "We often fancy you in your little boat, enjoying the fury of the waves," wrote one lady.

"You requested me to let you know whether I felt pleasure to be out in a rough sea which I can assure you there is none, I think to any person in their sober senses," wrote Grace,<sup>1</sup> and added, "I have seven apartments in the house to keep in a state fit to be inspected every day by gentlemen so that my hands are kept very busy and I never think the time long but often too short. I have often had occasion to be in the boat with my father for want of better help, but never at the saving of life before and I pray God, may never be again."

## CHAPTER TWENTY-SIX

### GRACE GETS INTO TROUBLE

ON her island, Grace could not possibly have realized the notoriety she was gaining on the Main, with the artists' pictures flooding all the booksellers' and print-shop windows, the subscription lists at all the Banks, the Press deluged with paragraphs of every kind.

She saw nothing of this. That she was known to everyone in the streets of all the important cities, so much so that she would be mobbed if she appeared, was impossible to realize. She felt that her deed had brought her many friends, and in her innocence, estimated them by fifties. To be admired by thousands—hundreds of thousands—was beyond her comprehension. If she attended the boarding school at Spittal, that was only a village like Wooler or Belford. Grace had never seen a real crowd in her life. The Feastings each September topped her concept of numbers and confusion.

The letters provided little rifts and peeps into a world which appeared to be brimming over with benevolence. A simple act of duty brought showers of praise out of the unknown towns and cities. The occasion had been awful, but the general compassion and pity the sad event had brought to light was beautiful. Grace responded trustingly and earnestly to her fellow beings everywhere.

Most of all was she touched and pleased with the subscription now

<sup>1</sup> Letter to Miss S. Price, St. James Terrace, Nottingham, January 25th, 1839.

being raised by the ladies of Edinburgh, under the ægis of Miss Catherine Sinclair, for Edinburgh meant more to Grace than any other city. Grace had a Scottish grandfather, and there is no more tenacious ancestry than the Scottish. Edinburgh was the city where her father's favourite poet Robbie Burns had gone, to be received by all the scholars and grandes. The ladies of Edinburgh, had a gracious sound; they would be kind to Grace, too; and Edinburgh was a beautiful city it would be easy to visit, for boats journeyed regularly from Sunderland to Leith; and to see the city under the ægis of such kind and influential patrons would be a privilege very different from making an exhibition of oneself in London.

Now in Edinburgh was an enterprising gentleman named Batty. Mr. Batty had a circus. A circus did not come under the spectacles considered reprehensive or dangerous by Mr. Darling. At a circus, pleasing exhibitions of agility and skill were given, shewing worthy feats of trained athletes, and interesting animals which the Naturalist had few opportunities to study at first hand. Moreover, Mr. Batty's circus was of the most refined and educative character. The Darlings read with interest and approbation the *Caledonian Mercury*,<sup>1</sup> October 11th, 1838.

“BATTY'S CIRCUS ROYAL,  
Earthen Mound, Edinburgh.

“Now open, for a short Season, with a Splendid Stud of Foreign Horses and Ponies, Wild Zebras, the Royal Elephant, etc. The Company consist of the greatest talent of the day—the Unequalled Vaulters—the Swiss Acrobats—the first Horsemen in the world—the Infant Actors, etc., etc.

“Doors open at Seven, to commence at half-past seven precisely. Prices of Admission—Lower Boxes 3s. Upper Boxes 2s. Side Galleries or Pit 1s. Gallery 6d.

“Equestrian Tuition, and Horses broke for the road or field. Cards of Terms may be had at the Box Office, which is open from ten till four, for the purpose of securing places. Ladies and Gentlemen wishing to see the Stud during the day time, may do so upon the payment of 1s. each to the Box Keeper.

“*Batty's Royal Circus*. This establishment opened on Monday evening in the commodious and elegant arena on the Earthen Mound, when a very crowded house, including a fashionable assemblage in the dress boxes, gave a warm welcome to the enterprising manager and his talented company. The latter include several distinguished performers, who may be justly termed ornaments of the equestrian and gymnastic arts, while the stud of horses and ponies is numerous, and comprises some beautiful specimens; we have also seen two wild Zebras, and the last but not least interesting feature of the collection is an elephant, which lends a fine effect to an Oriental pageant in which the whole of the various quadrupeds are introduced, richly and appropriately caparisoned. . . . Mr. Batty gave a specimen

<sup>1</sup> Thoughtfully forwarded by Mr. Batty.

of the perfection of his training, in the mare Beda, which seemed to have attained the 'ne plus ultra' of docility. He afterwards, as a Spanish Don, rode and managed six high mettled steeds around the circle, maintaining his slippery footing with all the skill of an accomplished equestrian, besides giving a dramatic colouring to the exhibition.

"From the admirable manner in which this place of amusement is conducted, as well as the taste shown in the selection and execution of the different entertainments, we have no doubt it will continue to meet with a large share of the public encouragement."

But Mr. Batty was, it seemed, of a generous and philanthropic, as well as a refined and enterprising nature. Mr. Batty was enthusiastic about Grace Darling's deed. The Edinburgh papers were still full of it.

Mr. Batty put in a second advertisement on November 5th, to say that on Thursday, November 8th, the proceeds of the entertainment would be devoted to the benefit of Miss Grace Darling, and concluded: "Colonel Clark and the officers of the 7th Dragoons, having been pleased to bespeak a Performance at this Arena, due notice will be given of the evening intended. Mr. Batty has just purchased the remarkably fine Lion Wallace, at an immense cost. The above animal is now undergoing a course of training under Mr. Batty's immediate inspection, and will shortly appear, together with the Great Elephant, the real Zebras, and the trained Monkey, in a Spectacle written by Mr. Batty, purposely to introduce the matchless animals."

Then Mr. Batty, like many enterprising people, went a bit too far. The Benefit was successfully given, and Mr. Batty had the brilliant idea of sending the money to Grace direct by one of his coadjutors, who not only paid the money into Grace's own hands, but spurred her to write a charmingly appreciative letter. But Mr. Batty sent the money, not from himself but from the *people of Edinburgh*, thus presenting himself as the mouthpiece of that beautiful and dignified city. His acting manager dilated on the interest Edinburgh took in Grace, here was twenty pounds sent by hand to prove it! Somehow, the ladies of Edinburgh and the City of Edinburgh seemed to be lined up behind Mr. Batty.

The general wish for a visit from Grace was expressed by Mr. Batty's representative: and the natural place for Grace's appearance was the arena of Mr. Batty's Circus.

It is quite obvious that Grace imagined her mere presence, seated modestly among the audience, would give satisfaction. And in the goodness of her heart, she wrote the following letter. Mr. Darling's cautious and exact phraseology is clearly visible in the acknowledgement of the money, but after that, Grace speaks in a rush of gratitude. Needless to say the letter was promptly published by Mr. Batty in the Edinburgh paper.

Longstone Lighthouse,  
November 11th, 1838.

To W. Batty Esq., Proprietor of the Circus Royal, Edinburgh.

Sir,—I beg to acknowledge the receipt of £20, which has been

handed over to me by your acting manager (Mr. Silvester) as the proceeds of an evening's entertainment (after deducting expenses), at your arena in Edinburgh. Allow me, Sir, to return you my sincere acknowledgment for the kindness which you have exhibited towards one personally unknown. I am likewise sensible of the great kindness that has been liberally bestowed on one so humble as myself by the people of Edinburgh; and it having been intimated to me that my presence in Edinburgh would greatly oblige those who have manifested so much anxiety for my welfare, I will take an opportunity shortly of visiting your arena in person.

I am, etc.,

GRACE HORSLEY DARLING.

If Mr. Batty had waited for his triumph until Grace had actually come! But the seeming success of his skilful plot went to his head. He started prematurely on the next step. Instead of letting her appear, and then beginning his campaign of indignation and defence in which Mr. Batty would appear as Grace's Champion, he shewed to anyone with ordinary discernment that he sought to figure as Grace's Only Friend, and to throw discredit on the ladies of Edinburgh and the City of Edinburgh and all the other cities and groups who were organizing funds for her.

He insinuated that the moneys subscribed by the entire nation were being artfully kept from her. He accused the artists of being mercenary (Mr. Andrews of Edinburgh being prominent amongst them). Think of Edinburgh, and its citizens when enthusiastically opening the *Edinburgh Observer* for fresh news of the heroine. They read this:

"Last week Mr. Batty gave a benefit to Miss Darling, when £20, deducting expenses, was realized. This sum was paid to her by Mr. Silvester, a member of Mr. Batty's establishment, on Saturday; and we were much surprised to learn notwithstanding all that has been said about presents sent to this heroic young lady, that except the medal by the Humane Society of Glasgow, and a cup, the present of Lord Fitzclarence—the above was the first money she had received. The statements that £5 had been sent by this and by that person, for a lock of her hair, and so forth, are so many pieces of figurative writing, and whatever she *may yet* receive, up to Saturday, nothing beyond what we have stated, had reached her or her venerable father. We thought, from what we saw in the newspapers, that Miss Darling must have received some thousand pounds—now we and many others have been misled. Three different artists, and a brother of the broad-sheet have visited the Farnes since the wreck of the *Forfarshire* but they of course went to turn the shipwreck into account, not to reward the Darlings. We trust this notice will have the effect of calling attention to the facts; that those who have taken an interest in promoting subscriptions will take means to make certain that the amount they receive shall reach the parties for whom it is really intended. Miss Darling has acknowledged by letter the kindness of

Mr. Batty and concludes by saying that she will take an opportunity shortly of visiting his arena in person."<sup>1</sup>

Imagine Miss Catharine Sinclair, and every one of Edinburgh's proudest and most respected ladies, to say nothing of the Lord Provost and all the City Dignitaries !

Think of Berwick and Glasgow and Leith and Dundee reading this editorial about their funds and efforts, in an Edinburgh paper !

And then realise what everybody felt about Mr. Batty getting into the news columns to advertise his circus.

For a man of that calling to impugn the good faith of the most dignified families of the North, to pose as Grace's sole benefactor, and to lure her to his circus as a competing attraction with lions, zebras, monkeys, horse-back riders, zanies . . . or his own meretricious horse-riding . . . let the mind go back to Mr. Gradgrind's reception of Sissy Jukes and her circus associations !

But Sissy was humble. Mr. Batty was not.

Poor Grace, still in a glow about the amiable and sympathetic Mr. Batty and his charming, pleasant-spoken Mr. Silvester ; and the coming visit to the city of her dreams, and the pleasure her visit to Mr. Batty's circus would give to Miss Sinclair and the ladies and everybody ! This was a treat indeed, to make up for all the weary hours of letter writing, and all the hours spent in writing her signature, and the loss of so much of that generous plait which formed her modest coronal. Grace still associated the wreck with mourning, but Mr. Batty assured her that the ten weeks which had elapsed was quite sufficient time to allow of her visiting a circus with propriety.

Happily and confidently she received the postbag with the speedy response from Edinburgh in form of several letters to herself and to her father, one in dear Miss Sinclair's handwriting. Poor Grace ! Poor Mr. Darling, who had seen Mr. Silvester, and thanked him and given his consent and dictated part of and read the rest of Grace's letter. For Miss Sinclair was not pleased at all.

Two letters are preserved. Both are written on large quarto sheets of paper, in educated handwriting ; the first one is in a particularly flowing hand with many flourishes and underlinings, unsigned and with the mere word " Edinburgh " as heading. The second is in a more vigorous hand, with a full address instead of signature, and is obviously from Miss Sinclair as the official voice of the ladies. The first, as will be seen, conveys the indignation of the " haut ton " of the city ; the second strikes a deeper note, of sheer dismay at the shattering of an ideal.

Imagine Grace's feelings when she read the accusation of turning God's protection to account for the furthering of her personal vanity.

From the Edinburgh Ladies to Grace Darling.

Edinburgh,  
November 4th, 1838.

Miss Grace Darling,

Having observed in the public papers, that Miss Darling is about

<sup>1</sup> This notice teems with inaccuracies.



to visit the city for the purpose of exhibiting her *person*, in a *low circus* of *Mountebanks*, if this be true (which we sincerely hope is not the case), we would with the utmost sincerity of friendship and admiration of her high character, recommend her *not* to *accept* any such offer; as we are convinced that such a presumptuous step would bring a stain upon those unfading laurels which she has so honourably gained: a *stain*, which could never be effaced. Indeed—any sensible person may easily see the very selfish motive of this *Batty's* proposal and we conclude this letter by seriously hoping, that she will not heedlessly throw this letter aside without reflecting upon its disinterested advice.

From Lindsay's Library, St. Andrew's Street, Edinburgh, to Grace Darling, Fern Isles.

November 16th.

The Ladies who are conducting a subscription in Edinburgh for a testimonial to Grace Darling, have been led to do so, from a belief that it was in a humble dependance on the protection of God and a generous devotion to the good of her fellow creatures, that she was led to act with a degree of heroism which (when exercised in so great an emergency, and from so noble a motive) merits all the respect which it has excited. It is with much regret that a letter has been observed in the newspapers lately from Grace Darling, proposing to appear publicly in the arena at Batty's Theatre, and the greatest injury has been already done to the well-earned reputation of Grace Darling, by so injudicious a suggestion, therefore it is the earnest hope of those who are now interesting themselves in collecting a permanent fund for the comfort of her future life, that she will refrain from an exhibition, which has already made a considerable change in the sentiments of those who were desirous to befriend her.

Perhaps the most stunning blow of all came from the *Edinburgh Courier*, promptly quoted in next week's *Warder*. Ignorant Grace might be, but what of her father? Was he incapable of protecting her? Did he know so little of the world, that he would allow her to be dragged "before the public on all occasions, for the most trifling causes?"

"In allusion to the letter from Grace Darling to Mr. Batty, of the Circus Royal, Edinburgh, which we quoted last week, we find the following judicious remarks in the *Edinburgh Courier*: 'We believe all parties are agreed that the conduct of Miss Darling in saving the lives of the crew of the *Forfarshire*, was the brightest example of heroism devoted to the cause of humanity that has been exhibited in modern times. Those who admire that conduct the most will be the first to deprecate the conduct which has since been pursued towards her, of dragging her before the public on all occasions, and for the most trifling causes. That Miss Darling should submit to this, can excite no surprise. Born, we believe, and certainly brought up on a rock, in the middle of the ocean, and from that cause as ignorant of the world as childhood itself, it is not to be wondered at that

<sup>1</sup> *Berwick and Kelso Warder*, November 24th, 1838.

she should submit, without contempt and indignation, to the meddling interference of those who, under the pretence of gratifying her, are only intent on ministering to their own vanity. The letter we have quoted above confirms us in this opinion. It is clear that she has no conception of the nature of what she there proposes to do. Fortunately, however, she has fallen into trustworthy hands ; and we have too much confidence in the good sense and good feeling of Mr. Batty, to imagine for a moment that he would encourage a woman who has deserved so well of her country, to place herself in a position which can be regarded in no other light, than a show, competing for the applauses of the vulgar with his well-trained quadrupeds.' ”

The ladies, the newspapers and Mr. Batty received due replies.

But think of Grace lying in her bed, with her father overhead, through the long night watches : each thinking of the shame that had been brought on them, the tremendous mistake that could never be spoken of between them.

For the first time, William Darling had proved himself inadequate to the occasion ; had shewn himself incapable of protecting Grace ; had exposed her to public shame and censure. Grace, lying awake, facing for the first time the knowledge that her father was not experienced in the ways of the world, not always wise. Grace, dreading her father's humiliation, aching for grief that she had brought this on him, unable to voice her pity because it would be impossible to admit to him or anyone that he had failed. But in the depth of her heart, knowing her father was not equal to protecting her from so cruel and terrifying a world.

There was no understanding of it, no hope of escaping it ; its harsh bewildering grasp was on her life, closing tight around it. If only people would leave her alone !

William Darling, at his nightly job, steadying himself with his Bible : taking some comfort that “ even his angels he chargeth with folly ” ; but a father should know how to take care of a delicate shy girl like Grace ; not seem to push her into the public eye ; Grace to be accused of vanity, immodesty, seeking notice ! Henceforth she should never shew herself to anyone if she didn't want to : no, not even to visitors to the lighthouse.

If only frankness had been possible ! If William Darling could have said : “ Grace, I've made a fool of myself ; ” and she, “ Father, you sure have, and of me, too. We've got to be much smarter with these kind new friends.”

But fathers and daughters didn't talk that way in Grace's time.

Mr. Darling sent a brief paragraph to the papers.<sup>1</sup>

“ We last week stated, on the authority of a letter inserted in the Edinburgh papers, that this young lady had acceded to the invitation

of Mr. Batty to visit his arena in Edinburgh ; we now allude to the subject to give it unqualified contradiction. Miss Darling has no such intention, her present popularity is without her courting, and she will take no means of intruding on the public notice."

But Grace, all unknown to herself, had aroused attention in higher quarters. The Third Duke of Northumberland, President of the Royal Humane Society ; a friend of the Duke of Wellington, Master of Trinity, and Vice-President of the National Institution for the Preservation of Life from Shipwreck, had been taking an active hand in the Darlings' affairs.

Grace was to be protected by the highest power in Northumberland ; and Grace and her father were ready to accept protection now, with humility and gratitude.

## CHAPTER TWENTY-SEVEN

### THE DUKE TAKES A HAND

IN the beginning of the nineteenth century classes were much more stringently divided than in what we are pleased to consider our democratic age ; and, separated by vast abysses of custom and habit, each class had its own sense of the duties that belonged to it. There was a steadily growing current stressing the duties of the individual, irrespective of his station, but this was considered exceedingly revolutionary.

In 1830 the Tory Government collapsed and the Whigs had it all their own way in the outside world where the Third Duke had played such a magnificent and distinguished part : so the Third Duke Hugh, Lord Lieutenant of the County and Vice-Admiral of the Coast, came back to Alnwick to devote the rest of his days to the care of his own people. He was pious and well-educated. He had taken his M.A. at Cambridge in 1805 and his LL.D. in 1809. A Member of Parliament when he was only twenty-two, he had introduced an Anti-Slavery Bill for the British Colonies in his first year. He became Viceroy of Ireland in 1829 and laboured assiduously to promote peace and to impress on His Majesty's judges the need of administering the law irrespective of class or creed. Sir Robert Peel pronounced him the best Viceroy Ireland had ever known. Greville attributed the Duke's acceptance of the post to vanity and an opportunity for flaunting his wealth : but Greville could not fathom the Duke's nature : magnificence seemed to the Duke as much a duty of his station as the administration of justice. His sense of duty moved him to encroach on the Northumbrian Commoners' rights and although he obtained an Improvement Act for Alnwick, it was through his influence that Alnwick was excluded from the Corporation Act in 1817. He considered Alnwick and his county were his territory and he felt much more competent to govern than his



THE THIRD DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND IN HIS COSTUME AS  
AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AT THE CORONATION OF  
CHARLES X

*By permission of Her Grace the Duchess of Northumberland.*



people. But on the other hand, he was deeply interested in the advancement of all classes, and presented Loudon's *Magazine of Natural History and Annals of Natural History*, in 18 volumes, Cobbett's *Political Register*, 16 volumes, and various other periodical works, to the Alnwick Mechanics Institution. The local press criticized the Duke for placing Cobbett in the hands of his tenantry and their labourers. "His Grace must have become a convert to Radicalism or otherwise he would never administer large doses of Cobbett to his tenantry. Sir Robert Peel ought to know of this circumstance," said the *Berwick Advertiser*.

"A good sort of man, but narrow-minded," says Greville. Narrow-minded with the limited vision of his class; broad in his views when duty and justice lit the way, duty and justice according to his understanding of them.

His people were a chosen people and he was their chosen leader. Chosen by God, not them. Their position precluded choice. His position enforced kindness. He acceded to his labourers' petition for an advance in their wages of two shillings a week in consequence of the high price of provisions, gave an annual donation of half-a-crown to eight hundred poor men and women who could produce testimonials of being of sober and religious habits and arranged great distributions of beef and groceries and feasting of tenants. He really was desirous of the welfare of those round him. For all his experience of power in public life, his Northumbrian tenantry remained nearest to his heart. He understood their problems, their character, their needs, and their weaknesses. In this great bleak northern land, his people lived an isolated and remote existence and he held that with his far wider knowledge of the world he had been placed there to govern and enlighten them.

Bamburgh and North Sunderland came particularly under his jurisdiction: as Vice-Admiral of the Coast, he took the greatest interest in the harbours of the county as well as in all its activities of benefit to seafarers and was a member of the National Institution for the Preservation of Life from Shipwreck, founded a few years previously for the purpose of rewarding those who risked their lives to save the shipwrecked.<sup>1</sup>

Now in Bamburgh there lived a gentleman who was also a member of the National Institution. Mr. Scafe considered the efforts of the Darlings and the North Sunderland men should be brought to the notice of the Duke and forwarded a report signed by Robert Smeddle, John Embleton (surgeon), Thomas Maddison (Bamburgh Castle) and himself.

His Grace promptly dispatched his secretary and another person to the scene of the catastrophe to obtain the names and all particulars of those who had distinguished themselves in saving lives or property from the wreck. The news his messengers brought back was so important that he sent the gentlemen again to see Grace and her father, who came over to Bamburgh Castle for that purpose. The first report had

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix.

so impressed the Duke that a plan had formed in his mind, and his messengers made the second journey to obtain a signed certificate of what had happened for the Duke's private purposes.

Grace and her father were under such a constant fire of interviews in those first weeks that the Duke's messengers were only part of the crowd, the confusion, the excitement. To this day none of the Darlings know what an important part the Duke had played in their affairs. William Darling's reply to Trinity, when the secretary wrote for a full account, is famous ; but the Duke's letter-book kept the secret of what prompted Trinity to make inquiries.

The Third Duke was orderly and thorough. Trinity House, William Darling's employer, must be the first official body to approach, and His Grace paid the Darlings the compliment of bringing them to the notice of the Master of that august Corporation on September 25th, when the Duke sat down and wrote to no less a person than the Duke of Wellington. He wrote in his capacity of Vice-Admiral of the Coast of Northumberland, inclosing proof of what had happened as well as sending his personal recommendation, and the letter was copied into his official letter-book.

From the Duke of Northumberland                      Alnwick Castle,  
to his Grace the Duke of Wellington,              September 25th, 1838.  
K.G., etc., etc., etc.

Master, Corporation of the Trinity House, London.

My Lord Duke,

In consequence of the strong representations that have been made to me as Vice-Admiral of the Coast of Northumberland, I have thought it my duty to lay before Your Grace, and the Corporation of the Trinity House, the enclosed Copy of a Certificate relative to the meritorious conduct of William Darling, the Keeper of the Light House on the Staples Island (*sic*) and his Daughter, who at the risk of their Lives succeeded in rescuing the only nine Persons who remained on the Wreck of the *Forfarshire* Steamer.

I shall not attempt to enter into those details of this most distressing Shipwreck which have been so fully enumerated in the various London Newspapers : At the same time it is but justice to Darling's exertions I should add, that he gallantly ran an unusual risk for that had he not succeeded in relieving the Persons on the Wreck, he could not, unaided, have regained the Light House until the return of the next Tide.

This, I understand, is not the first instance in which Darling has succeeded in saving human life.

In submitting this Subject to Your Grace, and The Board of Trinity, I have the more satisfaction in recommending Darling and his Family to your Consideration as I understand that their Conduct has been most exemplary during the period of their Residence at the Light House.

I have the Honour to be, etc., etc.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

(Copy of the Certificate enclosed.)

*We, the undersigned, do hereby Certify that when the " Forfarshire " Steam Vessel was wrecked at 4 o'clock on the Morning of Friday the 7th of September, on the Harker Rock, three quarters of a mile from the Light House on the Long Stone, at the Farn Islands on the Coast of Northumberland, the After-part of the Vessel having been swept away by the violence of the Sea, and the Fore-part being left with nine Persons on the Rock, William Darling, the Keeper of the Light House, did, at Day-Break on that Morning, with the assistance of his Wife and Daughter (being the only Persons then with him at the Light House) launch the Light House Boat ; and he, and his Daughter Grace Darling, about 22 years of Age (who insisted on sharing her Father's danger) did, notwithstanding the Force of the Tempest, which was still raging, succeed in reaching the rock, and bringing those nine Persons to the Light House in safety : where they were kept, and such assistance administered as their necessities required, till the Weather permitted communication with the main Land, which was for the space of three days.*

Robert Smeddle, Agent to Lord Crewe's Trustees,  
Bamburgh Castle.

John Tulloch, Carpenter	} Survivors from the Wreck of the <i>Forfarshire</i> Steam Vessel.
Daniel Donovan,	
his Mark, Fireman	

Trinity House took prompt action on receipt of the letter to the Duke, for on the 29th ult. a letter was dispatched to William Darling, in consequence of an inquiry specially ordered by the Board.

To this letter Darling replied with his famous description of the rescue of the *Forfarshire* Survivors (see page 76), and Trinity awarded him and his daughter, in approval of his conduct, a Free Bounty of Ten Pounds each.

But no reply reached the Third Duke Hugh, who had set the whole thing going. Imagine his feelings when he was told of a paragraph in the local press announcing that James Blackett, Esq., of North Sunderland, had received from the Trinity House, London, £10 each for Grace Darling and her father.

Not only had Duke Hugh received no intimation of this fact, he had received nothing whatever from the Duke of Wellington ; Trinity had acted at once, but they had communicated with William Darling and James Blackett.

Nearly six weeks had intervened since his letter on September 25th. His Grace's dignity did not allow of further notice of his friend, the Duke of Wellington !

As Vice-Admiral, he sent a stiff rebuke to Trinity for its neglect of his *official* letter.

From the Duke of Northumberland  
to J. Herbert, Esqre.,  
Sec., Trinity House, London.

Alnwick Castle,  
November 6th, 1838.

The Duke of Northumberland having forwarded an Official Letter



respecting the loss of the *Forfarshire* Steamer on the 25th of September last directed to The Duke of Wellington, Trinity House, London, and not having had any Acknowledgment the Duke fears his Letter has not been received.

Mr. Scafe's suggestion about the National Institution for Saving Life from Shipwreck had by no means been disregarded. The Duke forwarded Mr. Scafe's report at once to the Newcastle branch of the Institution. He was not content with this. Since 1821 he had been President of the National organization of the Royal Humane Society, founded in 1773 by Dr. Hawes for the purpose of encouraging efforts to save life from drowning, especially those apparently drowned.

In its early stages, this Society was deemed a dangerous institution formed to oppose and disturb the divine decrees of Providence who had ordained for various individuals death by drowning and accident. It was founded as a Scientific Society for the purpose of research into methods of resuscitation, and the founders incurred great suspicion, even execration. However, the Society had grown in grace and power and when the Duke became president, it was recognized as a great benevolent organization.

There were branches in different cities, and on September 19th the President of the Glasgow branch had sent a long letter to Grace with the silver medal, causing the wildest excitement in the village. The papers had chronicled that Mr. Smeddle had received it with a letter he was to give to Grace, that the letter was double and was supposed to contain money, "but that of course is only conjecture, and that a boat had been despatched to the Longstone to inform the inmates." The National organization had apparently left the matter to the branch societies; but as its President was the reigning sovereign of the territory in which the wreck had happened, the Third Duke felt his own society should recognize the deed. Moreover, John Alston, the Glasgow president, had not so much as mentioned the North Sunderland Lifeboatmen.

With his unfailing sense of justice the Duke also perceived the value of the effort the North Sunderland men had made, he saw by the papers that very little attention was being paid to them and in his first letter to the Royal Humane Society's Secretary, he took care to stress very positively the need of public recognition of their gallantry.

Alnwick Castle,  
September 26th, 1838.

From the Duke of Northumberland  
to Berkley Westropp, Esqre.,  
Secretary, R.H. Socy., Chatham Place,  
Blackfriars.

Sir,

I desire that you will take the earliest opportunity of submitting for the Consideration of the Committee of the Royal Humane Society the Copy of Certificate (enclosed) relative to the preservation of nine Lives from the Wreck of the *Forfarshire* Steamer on the Staples Island on Friday the 7th of this Month.

As the various Newspapers have so fully stated the particulars of this distressing event, I shall not attempt to repeat any of those details : it is, however, but justice to Darling and his Daughter to say that they risked everything in the cause of humanity : unless they succeeded in saving the Persons from the Wreck they could not, unaided, have possibly reached the Island again until the return of the next tide. Nine Persons, the whole of the Survivors of the Wreck, were safely conveyed to the Light House and owing to the great exertions of this meritorious Family they were restored from the effects of cold and their immediate wants were supplied.

In recommending this Family to the notice of the Humane Society, this I understand is not the first instance in which Darling has been successful in saving human life.

I should not omit here to mention the gallant Conduct of six or seven Fishermen who succeeded in forcing their way through a tremendous Sea and reached the Wreck. Fortunately the whole of the Sufferers had previously been lodged in the Light House ; the Fishermen however were enabled to save a great portion of the Wreck. Several other Boats attempted to leave North Sunderland but returned in despair into Port. The Fishermen who had succeeded in reaching the Wreck were detained nearly Seven days (*sic*) at the Island and having been prevented in reaching N. Sunderland again they got into Beadnall Harbour on Sunday Afternoon.

I have thought it my duty to make this Statement in behalf of these intrepid Fishermen as the risks they ran were so very great in visiting a Wreck at twelve miles (*sic*) distance from the Shore during such a tremendous Storm and it is gratifying to me to add that a Son of Darling's was one of the first Persons to jump into the Boat that succeeded in reaching the Wreck.

I am, Sir, etc.,

NORTHUMBERLAND.

But the Leith and Edinburgh Branches were following Glasgow's example, and before the National Society could possibly take action, Grace had received three silver medals.

The Third Duke Hugh was a man of magnificent ideas ; by virtue of his station he must do things on a grand scale. The Darlings were HIS people. Should Edinburgh and Glasgow see him in the rear ? The Royal Humane Society should give the Darlings GOLD medallions.

He communicated this suggestion to be discussed in Committee and received a reply, from the Founder, Benjamin Hawes, who had attended the first meeting held at the London Coffee House in 1774. Mr. Hawes was now Treasurer of the Society.

From Dr. Benjamin Hawes  
to the Duke of Northumberland.

London,  
October 25th, 1838.

My Lord Duke,

I am thankful for the honour of Your Grace's Letter of 21st., as the Committee who expressed a strong desire that Your Grace should be

consulted on the subject, did not consider their decision final until approved by You and I am the more gratified that You have favoured Me with Your sentiments.

As the Committee might not feel authoriz'd to go to the full extent of their inclination—as even then we should have to wait for confirmation of the General Court in January—I have determined on calling a special Court as soon as possible as the most effectual mode of accelerating Your Grace's suggestions—to take the whole affair into consideration. It is but fair to state that the argument which You have adopted was discussed at the Committee but as a Gold Medallion had never been voted for any case they were uncertain whether such a recommendation would have been sanctioned by the General Court.

So far from “losing sight of the interests of the Institution or setting a precedent,” I am of opinion that the welfare of the Society and the Interests of Humanity would be materially promoted by adopting the suggestions of Your Grace and there is not much to apprehend from setting a precedent as such extraordinary heroism never occur'd before nor is likely to occur again.

I cannot close this Letter without expressing my thanks to Your Grace for the great and lively interest You continue to take in the important objects of our Institutions as well as for the welfare of its Funds which I am happy to say increase in proportion to our increased expenditure and extending its objects.

The Committee consider they have been materially promoted and assisted by the influence of Your Name and character.

I have the honour to be

Your Grace's Obedient humble Servant,  
BENJAMIN HAWES.

At a Special General Court held on October 31st, 1838, Vice-President Sir Stephen Gasselee in the chair, Resolutions were unanimously passed by the Royal Humane Society.

“That the distinguished Courage and Humanity displayed by

WILLIAM DARLING

on the 7th of September, 1838, in not only going in a small Boat during a heavy Gale of Wind and a tremendous Sea, to the relief of the Sufferers who were wrecked in the *Forfarshire* Steamvessel on the Harker Rock, Coast of Northumberland, but in permitting his Daughter Grace Horsley Darling, to accompany him and thereby expose her Life to the impending danger which he incurred has called for the warmest approbation of this Special General Court and most justly entitles that brave man to the Honorary Gold Medallion of this Institution which is hereby unanimously awarded him.”

“That the singular intrepidity, presence of Mind, and Humanity which nobly urged

GRACE HORSLEY DARLING

to expose her life in a small Boat to the impending Danger of a heavy Gale of Wind and a tremendous Sea, in her intense desire to save

nine of the sufferers who were wrecked in the *Forfarshire* . . . and the extraordinary fortitude which she Heroically displayed throughout the whole of that hazardous undertaking has called forth the most lively appreciation of this Special General Court and eminently entitles that brave Girl to the highest Honorary distinction this Society can bestow—namely the Gold Medallion which is unanimously awarded her.”

The Royal Humane Society evidently felt they had done all that could be expected of them on the grand scale when the Gold Medal had been granted, but the Duke sent the offering to the Boatmen of North Sunderland, which was also voted, with a note to the clergyman at North Sunderland.

To the Revd. R. N. Taylor, North  
Sir, Sunderland.

Alnwick Castle,  
November 23rd, 1838.

From the great interest which I know you take in whatever relates to the melancholy loss of the *Forfarshire* Steamer may I request your assistance in the distribution of the enclosed Bill (for £10 10s.) among the gallant Boat's Crew who risked their lives in going off from North Sunderland to the Wreck.

The above-named Sum was specially voted by The Royal Humane Society and I have great pleasure as the President, in being the medium of so gratifying a Communication.

I am, Sir, Your Obedient Servant,  
NORTHUMBERLAND.

The Duke had himself given thirty pounds to the Bamburgh Fund for the Darlings and the Boatmen, and the Duchess ten pounds. His interest in the proper reward of the boatmen did not cease, as will be seen by his letter to Archdeacon Thorp, when all the moneys were collected and the Funds closed.

The North Sunderland Lifeboatmen appear no more in Grace Darling's story. This later letter to Archdeacon Thorp reveals the fact that the Duke had written at once to Newcastle putting forth their right to a share in the subscription, and once more testifying to his desire to do them justice.

From the Duke of Northumberland  
to the Venerable Archdeacon Thorp,  
College, Durham.

Alnwick Castle,  
September 27th, 1839.

Dear Sir,

Although I am still confined to my Couch, and scarcely fit for details of business, yet with the uncertainty how much longer you may remain at Bamburgh, I am unwilling to delay.

I quite agree with the view You take of the general distribution of the Money between Darling, his Daughter and the Seven Boatmen.

The money sent separately to Darling (£63), to his Daughter (£613),

and that to the Boatmen (£7), is already settled, but the remaining Sum £335 should I think (by the addition of £1 from me) be divided most scrupulously between them, by giving £112 to each of the three Parties. I well know how jealous that Class of Persons are on the score of strict and impartial justice in money matters and particularly when they trust solely to the honour of their superiors.

<i>Darling</i> , by my arrangement,	would have	£63	—£112	£175
<i>Grace</i>	"	"	£613—£112	£725
<i>The Boatmen</i>	"	"	£49 —£112	£161
or each <i>Do.</i>	"	"	£7 —£16	£23

Had we been called upon originally to arrange the general Sum, We might possibly have made a better distribution, but I do not know whether the Public would have derived any benefit from it for in fact the whole are in this instance so very much overpaid, that it may produce discontent in future Rescues from Shipwreck.

Had £20 been given to the North Sunderland Boat's Crew they would have considered themselves amply remunerated by the Public, but had I not requested the Mayor of Newcastle to suggest to the Subscribers to consider the services of the Boat's Crew (amongst whom was a Son of Darling) so that a part of the Fund might go to them as well as to Darling and Grace—their exertions would never have been recognized by (or even known) to the Public: I think therefore that We in justice are authorized to apply as far as one third of that Fund to the Boat's Crew which (but for my suggestion) would have been given only to Darling and his Daughter by the Subscribers from the want of sufficient information.

If any fair reason could be offered for giving a larger share to the Boat's Crew—then I think you must take the broad principle of giving *half* (£167 : £10) to each of the Two Boats.

The third broad principle of the Division of the Fund would be to consider an even distribution amongst the 9 Persons.

These two last suggestions, however, would I think give no satisfaction to the Subscribers, and Darling and his Daughter might have very reasonable grounds to complain, for they unaided did really save the *whole of the Lives* from the Wreck whereas the Sunderland Boat saved none, because there were none to save.

I thought, however, that they justly merited to be well rewarded, and my appeal was fortunately attended with success.

As I have just heard that You have passed through this Place for Durham I have entered thus fully into the details in order that the whole of my views on the Subject may be before you and the other Trustees in finally closing this business.

The Subject is brought now within such narrow Limits that I shall hope to hear the Result of your decision in which I shall be glad to acquiesce.

Believe me, Dear Sir,

Yours very truly,

NORTHUMBERLAND,

As the records of the present Royal Institution refer to the men as "fishermen" and there was no official Lifeboat Station at North Sunderland until 1852, doubt has been expressed as to whether there was a recognized Lifeboat with its crew in those days. The following letters from the Duke, however, shew that a Lifeboat Station certainly existed, and although the boat and harbour belonged to the Crewe Trustees, North Sunderland in common with the other coastal stations was under the surveyance of the Newcastle branch of the society. The scrupulous care with which the Duke attended to his duties as Vice-Admiral is also worthy of notice.

From the Duke of Northumberland  
to Robert Plummer, Esqre.,  
etc., etc., etc., Newcastle-on-Tyne.

Alnwick Castle,  
November 3rd, 1838.

Sir,

It having been reported to me that the large new Life Boat belonging to Bamburgh Castle was unable to proceed from North Sunderland to the Wreck of the *Forfarshire* Steamer: I wrote to the Trustees on the Subject, and have ascertained from them that they would willingly exchange their large new Life Boat for one that would row six Oars.

At North Sunderland a Boat of that size would be fully sufficient, and could at all times be launched and manned.

It occurred to me that our excellent Shipwreck Society at Shields might be inclined to sanction such an arrangement as they would have many opportunities of attaching this large Life Boat where the population required it and that the best objects of the Society would be promoted by sending a small Boat to the Trustees, for the use of that dangerous part of the Coast.

May I request you, Sir, to take an early opportunity of consulting the Committee on my suggestion, that no unnecessary risks may be incurred by delay during this inclement Season.

I am, Sir, etc., etc.,

From the Duke of Northumberland  
to Robert Plummer, Esqre.,  
Newcastle.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Sir,

Alnwick Castle,  
November 6th, 1838.

In answer to your Letter of the 5th instant, I entirely approve of the removal of an efficient Boat to North Sunderland; I should, however, have imagined that the Life Boat belonging to the Trustees of Bamburgh would have been too large for Holy Island: of this however, the Committee will have a better opportunity of judging.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *The Berwick Advertiser* (January 5th, 1839) was not wholly satisfied. "The Lifeboats at Holy Island and Bamburgh have changed stations. This is a very judicious step. We however hear that the Bamburgh Trustees have withheld the carriage of the Lifeboat; now as this is so material a part of her equipment, we cannot but regret that the people of Holy Island should be deprived of it. Although it is evident that they have got the best of the bargain, it is a pity to cripple the endeavours for so humane an object by any parsimonious feeling."

When I offered the suggestions in my former Letter, I considered that the Bamburgh Life Boat was better suited to some large Commercial Port, where it could at all times be launched and be well manned.

I am not aware of any spot on this Coast where an additional Life Boat is required ; for I understand that Mr. Baker Cresswell has one in the Vicinity of Hawksley Point (a most important Station) which can at all times be manned by the Cresswell Fishermen.

I am, etc.,  
NORTHUMBERLAND.

So here was the Third Duke busy about Grace and her father and they all unconscious of his august interest : the more he heard about the family, the stronger his enthusiasm became. He remembered his visit to the Longstone and the good impression the light-keeper had made. Grace was only ten but a sweet-faced little child whom people were attracted to, and kept in mind.

The Third Duke had no daughters, but he was extremely fatherly. Grace appeared to be a perfect daughter to her parents.

There is one more reference to the Darlings in his letter-book.

Alnwick Castle,  
From the Duke of Northumberland      December 1st, 1838.  
to Benjamin Hawes, Esq., etc., etc.  
Sir,

I have signed, and herewith return, the several Notes of Thanks which accompanied your letter of the 28th ult., and it will afford me great satisfaction to be the medium of presenting the two Gold Medals of the Society to Wm. Darling and his Daughter. They are both very well behaved and deserving Persons in their private capacity independent of their late very meritorious conduct and I only hope that the great sympathy that has lately been shewn to them by the Public will not produce any other feeling than that of gratitude.

I am, etc.,  
NORTHUMBERLAND.

In the last sentence there is a note—an echo—a suggestion that the Duke's enthusiasm had been gently called to order. There is an indication of a second voice : the voice of Prudence ; the voice of someone at his right hand : the voice of the Duchess Charlotte Florentia.

Which brings us to her.

## CHAPTER TWENTY-EIGHT

## AND WHAT OF THE DUCHESS ?

THERE was a power behind the ducal throne which, report had it, controlled the ducal movements inexorably. It was a benign and gracious influence, so subtle and discreet that the Duke never knew it existed. But onlookers who were not under the spell which a Duke exercises over the simple and subservient, observed the Third Duchess with a good-natured smile.

"Sensible, amiable and good humoured and said to rule her husband in all things," said Greville.

How could the Duchess Charlotte Florentia help ruling ? Was she not the granddaughter of Clive, Baron of Plassey, whom Mr. Pitt had termed a heaven-born general ?

The youngest daughter of Edward, First Earl of Powis, Lady Charlotte Florentia Clive was born on September 12th, 1787. She married the Third Duke when she was thirty and he thirty-two, and they made their public entry into Alnwick on June 20th, 1818, accompanied by five hundred of their tenantry on horseback. If the Duke maintained the splendour of his illustrious house, the Duchess was not behindhand in maintaining the traditions of hers.

Among all the dignitaries who were to come into Grace's life and be her friends, advisers and associates, the Duchess Charlotte Florentia was the most important and significant. Through her connection with Grace, she has been brought to light, and what a vivid character she was ! And how amazing the silence that has obscured her ! One can see the wealth of vitality in her springing curls, the poise of her head, her exquisite aquiline nose, and that lower lip which indicated pugnacity for all the sweet little cupid's bow above it. Even Lawrence could not prettify her indomitable forcefulness. Her figure was comely, nicely proportioned, with none of your sloping winebottle shoulders. She wore her grand clothes exceptionally well, and could carry a hat and plumes as gallantly as any cavalier. She had the fire of the Celt, and the soft touch of his velvet glove. But her eyes were too intelligent for the eyes of a schemer or dissimulator ; nor were they the eyes of a tyrant. She was simply a born manager. Most of all was she renowned for her goodness and her kindness. The Duchess had no children but what a god-mother she made ! The Hon. R. T. Liddell, M.P., and Mrs. Liddell of Eglington had the good fortune to be honoured by Her Grace at their youngest daughter's baptism. The clergyman brother performed the ceremony at half-past five, nicely in time for a sumptuous dinner at six, and Her Grace presented a beautiful china font for the immersion of her godchild.

Look at her as she plays her part in the county ! Few baptisms can have been so grand or festive.



"At half-past nine the ball was opened by the Hon. Mr. Liddell and Her Grace the Duchess of Northumberland, and was kept up with great spirit till one o'clock when the company retired to a splendid and elegant supper. The health of the Lord-Lieutenant of the County and Her Grace was drunk with loud and long applause after which the health of the honourable host and hostess was proposed in a most gratifying manner by His Grace, and loud cheers accompanied this toast. . . . The company then returned to the ballroom, and a varied succession of waltzes, quadrilles and other dances were continued until the early morning. . . . The ball-room was most tastefully decorated with wreaths of flowers and evergreens and the name bestowed by Her Grace the Duchess of Northumberland upon the young Christian (Florentia) was distinctly seen at the head of the room in large gold letters, intermixed with moss and flowers; on the side of the room were seen the initials of the Duke and Duchess with the respective coronets, most skilfully executed by Mr. Athey of Alnwick. There were about 160 people present."<sup>1</sup>

And then regard her at her husband's side in the privacy of his closet, where he sought his Maker. The Duchess was of serious disposition. Every day before he saw anyone, even on the most important matter, Duke Hugh read portions of the Holy Scriptures with the Duchess, and in that quiet hour, the coming business of the day was moulded. She also was deeply in earnest about her duty, but look at the breadth between her eyes, and the character of her eyebrows. She understood men and took an active interest in public affairs. Her correspondence was extensive, with such men as the Duke of Wellington, Thomas Greville, Sir Walter Scott, King William the Fourth, Lord John Russell, and Lord Grey.

Her interest in politics continued to the end of her life.

"I am not at ease about politics," she wrote years later to her niece, Lady Lucy Herbert. "How can Lord Derby stand though his party is the largest—when the other three combine against him—the Whigs who care for nothing but place and hatred to their opponents, the Peelites who are schismatics to Church and State, and the Radicals who wish for a Republic?"

"It is sad indeed, and what is perhaps worse, the want of honour and honesty in men who have been born Gentlemen. . . . I see everything gloomily—I do indeed—and doubt if we shall not lose India and the Canadas (not in my time)—and we richly deserve it—we have no steady principle left—and now having relieved my indignation, I will say no more."

She was always sensible, even about herself. She was very sensible about the Duke and the way he was pushing the Darlings *whom he had never seen*. It was her part in the most discreet and charming manner to see that the Duke's sensibility was kept in bounds. All this attention to a young girl of humble station! Was he wise in making such a fuss of

<sup>1</sup> *Whittingham Vale*, by David Dippie Dixon. Newcastle, 1895.



THE THIRD DUCHESS, CHARLOTTE FLORENTIA

By Sir T. Lawrence.

*By permission of Her Grace the Duchess of Northumberland.*



a young girl they had never seen, no matter how excellent her character ? The Duchess was deeply interested in young girls. Their training and education were of even more interest to her than politics. Had she not established a school in Alnwick for teaching fifty girls reading, needlework, and other accomplishments ? The scholars were uniformly clothed. None but children whose parents belonged to the Established Church were admitted. Dissenters and Catholics alike were banned.

She was very gifted too : the author of a History of Alnwick Castle, which included histories of Alnwick and the Abbey. The illustrations to this quarto volume were from her own pencil, as the text was from her pen, and both displayed considerable ability.

An authority on art, and letters, and the training of young girls in ways of piety and prudence, the Third Duchess's interest in education had led her to a very responsible position, even more responsible than that of consort to His Grace.

Among her friends was the Duchess of Kent, also deeply interested in the education of young girls, one young girl in particular. The King (George IV) was ill, and his heir (William IV) had no children, two infant daughters having died ten years or so ago. In the spring of 1830 every indication pointed to the succession of the Princess Victoria. If the sphere of the Third Duchess had extended no further than her county and her husband's Dukedom, she would have been interesting enough as a figure of her times. But in the obscurity of the part she played in the training of the heiress to the throne, is one of the most remarkable omissions of history. The name of the Baroness de Letzen is brought forward in all the histories of Queen Victoria, and it is generally assumed she was her only governess. The supervisor and director of the young Princess's training, the woman chosen from all England to form the mind of its future sovereign, who fulfilled her trust with marvellous sacrifice of her duties to her husband, remains almost unchronicled and unrecognized.

How this has happened, historians must answer, for we can find no explanation. The facts are these.

Up till 1830 the Duchess of Kent had supervised the Princess's education which was conducted by means of lessons from masters ; the Lady in attendance on the Princess, Baroness Letzen, helped the Princess with her studies as far as the preparation of her lessons was concerned, but the Duchess of Kent sat in the room while the lessons were given and took an active part in supervising the Princess's education. She now consulted the Bishops of London and Lincoln, and asked that in view of the onerous task of preparing the heir to the throne for her coming duties, the Bishops would go into the plan of study that had been pursued, and examine the Princess as to her educational progress. This was done and perfect approbation was expressed. The Duchess of Kent then sent the whole correspondence to the Archbishop of Canterbury. He again approved.

But it was felt that the highest possible supervisor as regards intelligence and character should now be found to train and form the Princess's

mind, and on April 10th, 1830, the Duchess of Kent addressed herself to the Duchess of Northumberland, perhaps the most prominent Peeress in the realm ; had she not been aiding her husband in his duties as Viceroy of Ireland for the last ten years and won golden opinions both there, and at Court ?

From the Duchess of Kent

to the Duchess of Northumberland.

Kensington Palace,

April 19th, 1830.

My dearest Madam,

The subject on which I address you, I have to request, may be considered a matter of strictest confidence, to be known *only* to your excellent Duke, you, and I (*sic*).

The very circumstance of making such a communication to you, renders it quite unnecessary, even if it was not foreign to my character, to make professions of confidence : I have it not only, but I write with it, great esteem and respect for your character, as well as feelings of friendship, from the agreeable intercourse I have had with you, for so many years.

I will now proceed to explain what all this leads to ; and as I feel assured of the sacredness of this communication, will speak out freely—I shall not do the object, or ourselves justice, if I do not do so, as it relates to my Angelic child.

It is not necessary for me to point out to you, the Princess's position ; what it has been ; what it is ; and what it may be ; at any moment.

It is as unnecessary for me, to advert to what I have done for her, and what I am doing : but what I propose to do is the point I address you on. . . . I have kept steady to the beacon of my later life—the interest and proper education of my child. . . . I now cannot shut my eyes to the future ; the Princess's situation will alter, either from her years, or the contingencies inseparable to our mortal state, either case brings her forward in relation to that station, it seems now the will of Providence she should fill, that of Sovereign of these Realms.

The consequence will be some appointments about her ; I will only dwell on one, that of Governess.

Whatever the title may be, it is one of the most paramount importance, to a female Sovereign more than to a male : The character, manners, feelings, delicacy, and dignity, no less than the high rank that distinguishes your Grace, as well as my deep personal regard, all lead me to hope, that you will lend a willing ear to my request, that you will fill that station to the Princess, if, it should be deemed expedient, to make that appointment.

Believe me, always to be, with sincere esteem,

My dearest Madam,

Your Grace's

Affectionate friend,

(signed) VICTORIA.

The Duchess accepted the post. Her Grace had no share in the teaching but supervised the lessons by the Princess's masters and was always in attendance when the Heiress Presumptive appeared in public or at Court. The following year, the Princess was taken for a lengthy tour of her future kingdom, to make the acquaintance of her future subjects and understand the manufactures and employments. Powis Castle, the early home of the Duchess of Northumberland, was visited, and they went on to Beaumaris where the little Princess presented the prizes at the National Eisteddfod. After visiting many famous seats, including Eaton, Chatsworth, and Alton Towers, the party made another visit to the Duchess Charlotte Florentia's relatives at Oakley Court, the seat of Mr. Clive, and when they passed through Ludlow, Lord Clive and Mr. Clive walked on foot at the head of a procession of mechanics. Everywhere, bouquets, cheers, adulation. The little Princess was the idol of her people. A young girl receiving homage, admiration, rapturous eulogies; with the Duchess of Northumberland attending her royal charge. They were at many Drawing-rooms together, and at the Juvenile Ball given on Victoria's birthday by the King and Queen at St. James's Palace. The Duchess had experience of a young girl under the fire of flattery. Letters passed between the Princess and the Duchess shewing the esteem and affection in which the Princess held her.

My dearest Duchess, (wrote the little Princess from Claremont, December 5th, 1831, when Victoria was twelve years old).

I gave Mama your most feeling letter. As she is going to write to you herself, I will only say, that your affectionate solicitude pleased her very much, and in our great affliction,<sup>1</sup> your feeling so much for us was very gratifying. I hope dear Mama is better, but it has been a sad event, and one, she will long feel. I wish I could do more to ease her mind.

I am very sorry to hear the Duke is unwell again; pray remember me to him.

Believe me,

My dearest Duchess,

Always to be

Your affectionate friend,

(Signed) VICTORIA.

The Princess came of age on her eighteenth birthday, May 24th, 1837, and a few days before this date, the Duchess went to Windsor to resign her charge. Evidently the Duchess wrote a valedictory letter to the Princess, who replied in terms that shewed the friendly relationship that had been established, and was to continue. To the end of her life the Duchess referred to her pupil as "Victoria."

Reading between the lines of the royal letter, one suddenly realizes what those seven years must have meant to both the Duke and Duchess—

<sup>1</sup> The great affliction was the death of the Duchess of Kent's mother, the Princess's Godmother and Grandmother, the Dowager Duchess of Saxe Coburg who died November 18th, 1831.

to be summoned at any moment to attend the young Princess at Court, on her progresses, her public engagements, besides the incessant round of lessons! To consult with the Princess's masters; to watch her character, her mind, unfolding. To be responsible. Truly, the Third Duke and Duchess had an exalted sense of duty, to go through with it.

Kensington Palace,  
June 3rd, 1837.

From the Princess Victoria  
to the Duchess of Northumberland.

My Dear Duchess,

I received your kind letter the day before yesterday and beg you to accept my best thanks for it.

Allow me to assure you how much I prize all the kind expressions of attachment contained in it; and I hope you will believe that though you have given up the situation of my Governess, I shall ever entertain the same regard and esteem I had for you when you were with me.

You are likewise, I hope, aware, my dear Duchess, that I shall always retain a grateful sense of your attendance which you performed so punctually, even I fear, at your personal inconvenience.

Pray remember me kindly to the Duke, and believe me always,

My dear Duchess,

Your affectionate and grateful friend,  
VICTORIA.

When the Queen married, the Duke and Duchess were specially invited by Her Majesty's command to be present at the christening of her first child, the Prince of Wales. The invitations to personages of rank not connected with the Court, were confined to the Duchess of Northumberland, the Duchess of Sutherland (late Mistress of the Robes to Her Majesty) and the Marchioness of Lansdowne.

Here was the Duchess, therefore, in close touch with the young Queen.

It seems extremely likely that something was said in high quarters about Grace's brave deed. At any rate while the Duke was busying himself with Trinity and his benevolent organizations for recognition of Grace's deed news ran like wildfire through the district and indeed the kingdom, that Her Majesty had honoured Grace with a gift of fifty pounds.

On the Tuesday Grace received the following letter from the Treasury.

Madam,

The Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury have commanded me to acquaint you that the attention of Her Majesty having been called to the circumstances attending the Wreck of the *Forfarshire* Steamer in September last, on the Harker's Rock near Longstone Lighthouse, and to the intrepidity displayed by you, by which under Divine Providence the lives of nine persons were saved in circumstances of great peril and difficulty, Her Majesty has signified Her Pleasure that as a Mark of Her Gracious approbation of your conduct

on the occasion the sum of Fifty Pounds should be paid to you, and their Lordships have given direction to the Paymaster of Civil Services to make the payment to you accordingly.

I am,

Madam,

Your obedient Servant,

A. G. SPEORMAN.

PS. You are at liberty to draw a Bill according to the enclosed Form, upon proper Stamp, for the amount.

With the letter came instructions that Grace and her father were to present themselves at Sir Mathew Ridley's Bank at Alnwick on the Wednesday and receive the money: they were then to be conducted by one of the Commissioners of the Castle to the presence of Her Grace.

The Duchess knew the Royal letter was being sent to Grace; it is certain Her Majesty's attention had been directed to Grace's deed by the Duchess; but the Duke knew nothing about the visit which had been commanded. Later he referred to "an accidental visit of the Darlings to this place" when he was taken by surprise to hear they were actually in the Castle.

But the Duchess was awaiting them with a handsome Paisley shawl as her contribution, and some local papers announced the Duchess herself presented the Queen's gift.

Could it be that Her Grace, the wise, the far-seeing, the experienced conductor of another young girl through the billowy sea of adulation, had thought it prudent to see Grace herself and form her own opinion of this charming heroine whose smile and eyes were captivating the whole country?

The Duchess of Sutherland bonnet had been deposed for the "Grace Darling hat." The reports of Grace's consent to exhibit herself at Batty's Circus, had certainly reached the sharp ears of Charlotte Duchess Florentia. Report was busy with new stories daily of Grace's lovers. Men of rank were offering her their titles. To see her was to fall at her feet, helplessly adoring. Her very name exercised a spell.

Here was the Duke with his thoughts full of her. A gold medal was receiving his personal care. The design for the Royal Humane Society had not satisfied him: he was adding further details, more and more exalted praise. . . .

The Duchess had mentioned this brave young woman's deed to the Queen, and Victoria, with her youthful impulsiveness, had sent a gift. The Duchess was responsible for introducing this young girl to the Royal notice.

There seems no doubt possible but that Charlotte Florentia felt that a little chat with Grace and her father, a kind gift of a shawl, and a dish of tea waiting for them in the housekeeper's room, would be advisable before things went any further.



## CHAPTER TWENTY-NINE

## THE DARLINGS VISIT THE CASTLE

FEW towns in England are so dominated by any one edifice as Alnwick is dominated by the Castle. As one approaches by the Belford road, the Castle towers and walls surmount a gentle slope of greensward with the river Aln smooth and placid in the foreground and on the stone walls on either side the highroad, the lions of the Percies suddenly rise up as if barring entrance to the town ; or at least most unmistakably announcing that from then on, the traveller is in ducal territory.

The Castle Barbican juts out into the square, with battlemented walls on either side, blocking out the pastoral landscape and giving the effect of a walled town. Grim and grey, the Castle casts a shadow on the cobblestones, and turning the corner into Narrowgate Street, effectively shuts out light and air from the narrow causeway that leads into the centre of Alnwick. Opposite the Barbican stand prim Georgian houses with trees before them and a slope of cobblestones between the pavement and the square.

There is an extraordinary intimacy between the Castle and the town. It takes the flat fronts of the houses, the descending and ascending streets unto itself and gathers them around it. The great blank walls are so out of proportion to the neatly windowed residences or the little shops in Narrowgate.

In the Middle Ages there was a great open space or bailey here used by the garrison for martial exercises ; and on the battlements of the Barbican are stone figures of archers, a usual feature of castles in Edward II's time, placed there to divert the aim of attacking forces. The mimic defenders stand outlined against the sky, and two come right down on to the wall above the doorway. Beneath them is the Percy shield, with the Lion rampant of Louvaine carved in stone and the motto "Esperance ma Comforte." This Barbican and gatehouse were built by the second Earl, son of Harry Hotspur.

As one enters the dark passage through the frowning walls, one is conscious of incredible solidity, a dead weight of tradition of attack and warfare as if all the force of the Dark Ages is pressing down. One traverses a long passage way with grim walls towering overhead, disclosing a mere rift of sky, and thence into cavernous darkness with the great door barring the way.

Beside the door is an iron bellpull. Then a small door, cut in the great portal, is opened by a man in uniform and one is in the first courtyard, the Outer Ward or Bailey. Imagine it : for almost a thousand years, since the Barbican was builded, no ray of sunshine has ever penetrated that black tunnel even though it is open to the sky.

Beyond it, to this grassy courtyard with its curtain walls and towers and middle gateway, came all the tenants as far back as the fourteenth century, when the Castle horn gave warning of Border onroads, and

from the outlying farms, the followers of the Percies flocked into the Outer Bailey for protection. Entering, one seems to leave this age of mechanical invention and industrial power far behind. The stone figures on the battlements give a naive and childish air to the defences. And yet there is something oppressive in their solidity. The walls of Alnwick Castle shew no sign of crumbling. They stand as memorials to the might of a family that has always ruled.

Knowing Alnwick, one can reconstruct the visit of the Darlings. On the Farne Islands, washed by the waves, swept by the winds of heaven, Grace had been brought up amidst the might of Nature; here, she stood within the precincts builded, owned and ruled by the might of man. When Grace received the summons to the Castle, she had no conception that its shadow was to lie across her life, growing deeper and deeper unto her last hours. Her sole anxiety was that she would conduct herself properly in the momentous interview with the Duchess. Her father was beside her to protect her, and the Commissioner to the Duke, Mr. Blackburn,<sup>1</sup> was to conduct them to Her Grace, but she had no experience of the manners prevalent within these massive walls, nor her father, either.

Knowledge of their ignorance—their abnormal ignorance—of how to conduct themselves to people so tremendously their betters; that was Grace's chief concern. She knew how to behave with Mr. Smeddle, and the Reverend Andrew Boulton, and the Gentlemen from Trinity; but all the great people of their life counted here for little better than themselves.

One can see her in her simple gingham gown and black beaver bonnet lined with white, her gold-brown ringlets looped about her fresh complexioned face, her mouth pursed sweetly and gravely, her dark eyes very solemn; her father in his Trinity uniform strode gallantly beside her, with Mr. Blackburn, learned in the law and well acquainted with the Castle, giving them instructive information.

Through the Middle Gateway, into still another stretch of close mown turf with endless towers and walls again about it; the Constable's Tower exactly as it was in the fourteenth century, with the arrow slits for the crossbow, the Postern Tower and Sally-port, the Falconer's and Armourer's Towers. Bamburgh Castle, impressive enough with its walls that topped the great rock rising from the sea, could be at least understood, with its big kitchen where the boarders from the school had their meals, and the hall where the boarders had lessons and where the noble owners of the castle once had dined. There was a thick walled keep at Bamburgh, containing the library which William Darling frequented on the second floor, a grim dark building, very impressive with its tenth-century masonry and slits of windows and vaulted ceilings of the guardroom.

But Bamburgh Castle was nothing whatsoever compared to Alnwick.

<sup>1</sup> Edward Berens Blackburn, Barrister-at-Law, was born June 28th, 1786, and died August 7th, 1839. For 12 years he had been Chief Justice at Mauritius. He died while in active discharge of his duties as Resident Commissioner at the Castle.

It was difficult, indeed impossible, to comprehend how one family could live in a place like this. As they passed through, Mr. Blackburn had pointed out a tower in which was housed a collection of minerals made by the Duchess Charlotte Florentia. For a moment there seemed to be something in common between Her Grace and themselves with their collections, but when that tower had been passed, the Darlings were still in a wilderness of towers and baileys ; they hadn't yet entered the Inner Ward with the main entrance to the keep.

At last the two great octagon towers confronted them, the most impressive feature of the Castle. Stone figures again, a man winding up a crossbow held between his legs, another drinking from a bottle, all extraordinarily life-like stuck up on the battlements against the sky, with those imposing shields under the string-course of the towers. And then the main door of the keep and the door to the private apartments. They entered the outer hall, dark for all the winter sunlight. Archways on either side of the door, and gloomy windows, and a great stone fireplace opposite in which logs and coal made a great roaring blaze. The firelight caught the decorations of the walls, glittering on the intricate arrangement of pikes and swords with cuirasses as centres—a crisscross radiation of gleaming lines and surfaces which caught old Darling's eye. They stood among the weapons of the corps of yeomanry the Second Duke had raised ; amongst them were the sword and pike that Darling himself had wielded when he had come over to drill in the Outer Bailey, or to exercise before the Castle gateway, more than twenty years ago.

But Grace's eyes were fixed on the arches across the hall through whose glass doors she saw a white-panelled hall with gilt and crimson chairs and a great staircase of solid stone : a scene of fairy-tale magnificence and luxury leading from the grim darkness where the weapons gleamed.

How should she address the Duchess ? Terrible thought : perhaps her ignorance would betray her into a too great familiarity. The Duchess would stand, of course, and Grace would curtsy, and her father make his bow, but after these signs of respect, what would be expected from them ? They did not know Mr. Blackburn, and could not ask advice from a stranger. In any case, it was a delicate and difficult subject ; proper behaviour to a Duchess from such plain people as light-keepers. If they had any experience of the world . . . but Grace had had none at all, and she knew now that her father had very little ; only amongst seafaring men and now and then a schoolmaster or clergyman.

Everyone spoke of the goodness and kindness of the Duchess but Grace would have feared Royalty less. The King and Queen and their family belonged in a way to the nation just as the nation belonged to them. But with such a mighty person as Her Grace, so very near them, in a way, and they so terribly near her now, in her own home—this home of innumerable battlements and dungeons and towers in which she housed her minerals—it was like coming into the presence of someone before whom human customs of speech and conduct were inadequate.

The Duchess was waiting in her boudoir for the summons to the room where her guests were to be led ; the Duke in his study, at that very moment was receiving the gold medals just arrived for his inspection. The parcel was in the actual process of unpacking, string, seals, paper scattered ; the new-minted, shining newness of the precious objects in his soft white hand . . . and then the news from his secretary or some servant, a mere allusion to the visit . . . perhaps elicited by an inquiry for his Duchess that he might shew the medals to her. . . .

The Darlings were in the castle at that moment.

He could actually give the medals to them, with his own hands, now. The vellum scrolls had not arrived yet, but such an extraordinary coincidence. . . .

The Third Duke rose up from his writing table, a very fine figure in his immaculate light trousers strapped about his brightly shining shoes, his surtout exquisitely waisted, his high stock and superfine white linen.

The Third Duke Hugh was every inch a duke ; there was a kindly serenity about his patrician features but there was considerable inexorability about that serenity.

His aquiline nose, delicately modelled, like his chin, was sufficiently prominent ; his mouth agreeably firm and beautifully moulded. His lofty forehead, looking all the higher for his upstanding vigorous hair, and well-marked brows over alert yet tranquil eyes, redeemed his countenance from insipidity. True, his lofty forehead was inclined to retreat a little and his eyes were too closely set. It was a narrow face for all its elegance and finely-chiselled features. There was about him a complete certainty in his own decisions far more irresistible than truculent or arrogant assertion. He wanted to be just, he took the greatest pains to be just, and he was always quite certain about the justice of the conclusions he came to with the help of his Creator. This faith in a protective and benevolent Deity was as firm as the Duke's faith in his own ability to manage, not only his affairs but the affairs of everyone in his domain. The trouble was that he considered he had been placed in a position where he could judge for those in a lowlier position better than they could for themselves, and his conviction on this point had something hypnotic in its intensity.

An autocrat, a very benevolent and prepossessing autocrat, with the vision of his class and times.

One comes back always to the first impression of unconquerable benignancy.

So Grace, curtsying low before the Duchess, delighted with her amiability which put Grace at her ease at once, raised her eyes to perceive this magnificent Duke entering with the medals in their little cases.

What did she think of him ?

There is no question that she took him at his own valuation. He seemed to her the most magnificent person in the world : someone whose word was law : supreme authority : whom she could trust as she could no longer trust her father. With his entrance came complete protection. The world could never produce a greater power ; in the

shelter of his kindness she was safe. Grace was in awe of him all her days, but her faith in him never wavered. As for the Duke, his surrender to Grace's charms was instant. It was the age of the Gardener's Daughter, Highland Mary, and Jeanie Deans. Her smile, her childlike eyes, her unsophisticated frankness, her simple modesty went to his heart. Brave yet so helpless ; the nation's idol yet so unprotected, looking up at him as if mutely asking to be gathered up under his mighty wing.

Every word she spoke went to his heart. Her voice was as sweet as her smile. She answered questions with such engaging naiveté : received his warnings so gratefully.

Grace was no longer a humble person in his territory who had behaved meritoriously and deserved his ducal recognition. Grace's exquisite *rightness* of attitude, her simple acceptance of the Duke as supreme sovereign of his world, her gratitude for his notice without a single false note of elation or servility, delighted him. She remained so perfectly in her place. She knew so thoroughly her duty. The world's approbation had not dimmed her crystal clear appreciation of propriety. It was an age of dangerous unrest, and Grace was undisturbed ; an age of feminine striving for emergence from its chrysalis and Grace remained contented with her duty to her parents and her family and home : an age of greed and vanity, and Grace wanted none of the gauds and gewgaws of the world's bestowal.

She had risen to heroic heights, and saw heroism and self-sacrifice as the mere plain ordinary Christian duties. Possessing all the most prized female virtues—gentleness, modesty, pure-heartedness, neatness, refinement and the delicacy that comes and only can come from a nature brimming over with unconscious kindness—Grace moved along her appointed path, without any knowledge of her charm, without any theories as to what a woman should or should not be, without any desire but to do her humble and simple duty in the lot whereto she had been called. Station, position, function, purpose, were as fixed in Grace's mind as the ruling of the planets and the stars. She did not question the social universe ; she did not question anything.

The Duke realized that he and Grace saw eye to eye on all the essentials ; Duke he might be, light-keeper's daughter, she ; but they had a mutual reverence for their Maker, a mutual acceptance of the Catechism in all its implications, a mutual inheritance of commonsense, and a mutual trust in one another. Everything that Grace said or did, not only charmed and delighted His Grace but confirmed his good opinion of her and himself.

The Duke liked William Darling, too, but he liked still more Grace's unswerving loyalty and devotion to her father. A father who knew his duty also to the Duke ; a father with honest good sense and ability in matters pertaining to a light-keeper but with little experience of the world, of the public press, and public meetings, and public laws, and public matters, all quite out of a light-keeper's sphere.

As for William Darling, he had been brought up to respect his superiors and he recognized in the Duke an authority greater than his own.

So that when, in the overflowing enthusiasm this sudden encounter with Grace inspired, the Duke had an inspiration—or was it the Duchess?—William Darling accepted it in all humility. The Duke was to be Grace's guardian ; as his ward she would be shielded from all possible danger and attack. Were her good name assailed, as in the business of the circus, Grace was to inform the Duke and he would deal with her detractors. She promised she would marry no one without his approbation of the suitor ; would leave all her money and her business in his hands.

With what thankfulness Grace felt the burden of her inexperience lifting : the firm white hands of the Duke took all responsibilities away. Her father had failed her ; the Duke could never fail. From that hour Grace looked to the Duke for advice in all predicaments.

As a proof of his supremacy, here were these gold medals. Nothing to compare with them had come. They were to be left with the Duke who wished to return them for some slight alterations. It was plain the medals had emanated from him.

The Duchess was kindness itself, the shawl most handsome, the Queen's gift a surpassing honour ; but the overpowering impression of the visit was the condescension of the Duke, his effusive cordiality, his benevolent adoption of Grace in her peculiar position as his own particular charge. We may be quite sure the Duchess approved. In fact, the realisation of Grace's difficult position would be much clearer to the Duchess than the Duke. But as usual, she managed things so that he thought it his own idea.

Compared to the homely rusticity of their visitors, one sees the Duke as a great golden King William Pear, suavely swelling, ineffably mellow, with his consort, a glowing Peach, highly coloured, luscious, but with a firm and tangy kernel ; while William Darling has the texture of a russet apple, hard, sound, flavoursome, and Grace in her smooth-spoken invincibility and her sweetness appears a hazel plucked from the clean green branches in the hedgerow ; the Duke and Duchess so urbane and mellow, the Darlings so homely and yet so full of savour—the savour of common life with courage and decorum.

When the adieus had been made the Darlings were escorted to the housekeeper's room and regaled on various delicacies ; then they were conducted by the Castle porter round the castle. He and the household were surprised at Grace's intelligent interest and her questions. But Grace was not quite so meek as to feel awe of the porter now. Her feelings were very different from those with which she had entered the castle. Then she had no idea of the reception she was to receive. Now she moved modestly but securely in the very midst of the Ducal favour. Nor should it be forgotten—and she did not forget—she was now a Gold Medallist.

But Grace and her father were not foolish enough to lose their heads. The favour of the Duke and Duchess could only be retained by the strictest observance of proprieties. When at last they came out from the Barbican, they found the space before the Castle filled with a cheering

crowd, assembled to see the heroine and speak with her. For Grace to seem to ape the place of a Guest of Honour was distressing.

In vain they hurried down Narrowgate to the little greengrocer's shop kept by their cousins, the Macfarlanes. Miss Blackburn was waiting for them with a gift and others of the town were with her, both of the Blackburns' and the Macfarlanes' acquaintance. The shop was soon as crowded as the street and square.

But in spite of the fact or partly because of it, that they "anxiously avoided public curiosity," everyone was charmed.

"Mr. Darling is a very fine military-looking old man, and his countenance indicates a high degree of warm-heartedness and energy of character. Grace does not belie her name, for she is indeed a sweet, modest, and unassuming girl, and appears to be unconscious of having done anything great or noble. The manner in which they bore the searching curiosity of the Duke and Duchess of Northumberland, and their numerous visitors, as well as that of the people at large, was truly worthy of the gentle heroine and her heroic sire," wrote a correspondent of the *Newcastle Journal*, and all the local papers concurred in equally flattering expressions, although every one of them gave a different version of the visit; one had it that the Duke gave Grace a handsome present for Mrs. Darling; another that he presented her with £20 from Lloyd's (both untrue). But no paper had the great news that Grace had now a Ducal guardian.

The Duke sent an account of the visit to Mr. Hawes of the Royal Humane Society; the next day, as it happened, Mr. Hawes replied to a previous letter of the Duke's, containing suggestions for the improvement of the medals, so that the letters crossed.

Alnwick Castle,  
December 13th, 1838.

From the Duke of Northumberland  
to Benjamin Hawes, Esqre., etc., etc., etc.

Sir,

By the accidental arrival of Darling and his Daughter, at this Place; I had an opportunity of presenting to them the two Gold Medals from the Humane Society, but time not having been allowed for giving them also the two Vellum Votes and a Copy of the Resolutions of the Committee, I shall take an early opportunity of forwarding those to the Lighthouse.

It was truly gratifying to me to witness the very diffident but enthusiastic manner in which these Rewards were received.

May I request You, Sir, to take an early opportunity of conveying to the Committee the best thanks of Darling and his Daughter for the valuable Gold Medals of the Society, which they are determined to preserve during the remainder of their lives; and also to assure Them how highly they appreciate the very handsome expressions of the Votes of Thanks, though they consider the terms far beyond any merit to which they are entitled.

These valuable marks of the Approbation of the Humane Society could not have been better bestowed, and I feel confident will give very general satisfaction to the Public.

I have, etc.,

NORTHUMBERLAND.

From Benjamin Hawes,  
to the Duke of Northumberland.

London,  
December 14th, 1838.

My Lord Duke,

I should have done myself the honour of acknowledging the receipt of Your Grace's Letter much earlier but was absent in the Country.

My first duty is to thank Your Grace for the favour You have confer'd on the Society in undertaking to present the Medallions and I need scarcely say how much it will gratify our Committee to find the objects they had in view, (when they requested me to submit to You, the importance of Your Grace's presiding at the Anniversary)—so fully accomplished, thus enhancing the value of the testimonial and the usefulness of the Society.

I had the opportunity of meeting six of our most attached and oldest friends of the Society to whom I communicated your suggestions, they unanimously agreed in opinion that the value and identity of the Medals would be increased, by adopting as far as practicable the improvement proposed—if Your Grace would be kind enough to order them to be returned to Mr. Westropp I will without delay consult the Engraver on the subject.

From the kind interest you have taken in this transaction I need make no apology for observing that as the Names are engraved on the reverse side of the Medals, the following inscription round the Rim may be sufficient, "for saving Nine Lives from the *Forfarshire* on September 7, 1838." I shall however be most happy to receive any inscription You may deem more appropriate.

With reference to the following passage in Your Grace's Letter "in cases where a Sum of Money is given as an equivalent instead of the Medals—what would be the sum instead of the Gold, and what instead of the Silver?" Independent of the costs of the Dies (£250 to Pistrucci) the intrinsic value of the Gold for each Medal is 10*£* and Silver 20*s*. One Case has only occurred within my recollection wherein the Silver Medal was voted but it was represented that a pecuniary Reward would be infinitely more acceptable—the Committee voted 5*£* in lieu, as money has never been given when the honorary Reward is voted.

Your Grace also suggests, "that it should be so contrived that the Medal might be worn suspended," that plan used to be adopted, after the execution of the present beautiful Dies it was thought the Medals would be injured—should Your Grace think it more expedient to be worn, I think they might be neatly enclosed by Glasses, with a small Ring affixed for the Ribbon.

I should be most happy to forward any plan that Your Grace



recommends and again regret my absence should have so long delayed replying to your very Kind and interesting Letter—and subscribe myself,

My Lord Duke,

Your Grace's humble and obliged Servant,  
BENJAMIN HAWES.

But Christmas-time was approaching. In the stream of benevolence proceeding at this season from the Castle, the Darlings had a special part. Now was the time for the Duke, as Guardian, to send gifts to his Ward. These did not come within the province of the Castle Almoner but were the Duke's concern. He thought out the gifts that would be most appropriate to the family at the Longstone, and packed the box with his own hands.

What a careful choice he made ! First, he equipped Grace's parents and herself with an outfit of the new invention, *Waterproof Clothing*.

Waterproof was the new invention of the day.

In 1781 Samuel Peal had taken out a patent for waterproofing cloth by brushing hot rubber over it, but it was not till 1820 that Charles Macintosh, F.R.S., of Glasgow, proposed to use coal-tar naphtha with a solution of indiarubber for waterproof garments. He entered into partnership with Messrs. Birley of Manchester and Charles Macintosh & Co. began. Thomas Hancock in 1819 had been energetically investigating too ; in 1825 he invented goloshes and in 1826 joined forces with Macintosh. In 1837 Hancock took out a patent for a spreading machine which put the product into general use.

The Duke carefully added the word *waterproof* after each garment on his list of presents which he wrote out in his beautiful clear hand on the finest gilt-edged notepaper.

He chose a watch for Grace. Chronometers were really important in those days. A father always gave his children then watches : gold for the son, silver for the daughter. Grace's was silver-gilt : she always called it " my gold watch."

The Lords of the Admiralty gave annual premiums to the makers of chronometers which performed with the least variation in prescribed limits. His Grace wrote out meticulous directions :

" The number of Grace Darling's watch,  
No. 7262.

Johnson,  
Stroud, London.

26th Dec. 1838.

" The watch if constantly worn by Grace Darling will go remarkably well.

To wind up.

Take hold of the ring with the finger and thumb (holding the face of the watch downwards) and press the thumb nail against the spring at the end of the Pillar. The back will then fly open—with the key wind from right to left, that is, looking south ; wind from West to East.—When the watch is first wound up it is better to wait till the hour is the same as the watch than to attempt to alter the hands."

Then he selected a handsome but sober leather case containing two volumes of Morning and Evening Prayers and wrote on the fly-leaf :

To Grace Horsley Darling with the best wishes of her Guardian for her future welfare and happiness. 1838. ND."

He enclosed the following list with his Christmas box :

*"List of things sent in the box to Wm. Darling.*

Medal from the shipwreck society at Newcastle.

A coat—Jacket—Trousers—and cloth for D.—of waterproof Cloth.

2 Votes of thanks on vellum (framed) from the Humane Society.

For Mrs. Darling.

A silver teapot to be constantly used by her and afterwards to belong to Grace H. Darling.

Camlet cloak waterproof.

4 lbs. of Tea. (turn over.)

For Grace Horsley Darling.

A silver-gilt watch with a gold seal and two keys.

A medal from Shipwreck Society at Newcastle.

Camlet cloak waterproof.

A prayer book with the daily lessons from the Old and New Testament.

Volume with the best notes to accompany the Bible.

One of the vellum notes of the Humane Society.

N.B. The two medals, the watch seal and keys are in the inside of Mrs. Darling's teapot.

The Prayer book sent by her Guardian may be very convenient to those who are detained at the Light-house on Sundays.

The notes on the Bible are the best that have been published.

To Grace Horsley Darling, Longstone Lighthouse. N.<sup>1</sup> "

## CHAPTER THIRTY

### HOW THE FAMILY TOOK IT

If the position of a heroine were disturbing to Grace, the relatives of a heroine were under no such embarrassment. Distant or near, they glowed with pride in the connection. The more distant the relationship, the greater their desire for the heroine to honour them with a visit.

Gateshead, Newcastle,

October 29th, 1838.

From Thomas Brown

to Mr. and Mrs. Darling.

Dear Cousins,

Having occasion to be forwarding goods to Belford we cannot resist

<sup>1</sup> Sometimes he signed himself N., sometimes Nd.

the temptation of sending a few lines to you merely in the way of inquiring after your healths and wishing when opportunity turns up, to be favoured with a few lines from you.

We are all proud to see by the public prints that the world is not insensible to Miss Darling's merits. Since we came home, a great many ladies and gentlemen of our acquaintance have been enquiring anxiously after her. So I have promised them a sight of her and by your leave, you must allow her to come for a few weeks. And we will try to be as kind to her as lies in our power.

We need hardly repeat this invitation again. I trust according to Miss's promise that she will take an early opportunity to pay us the promised visit.

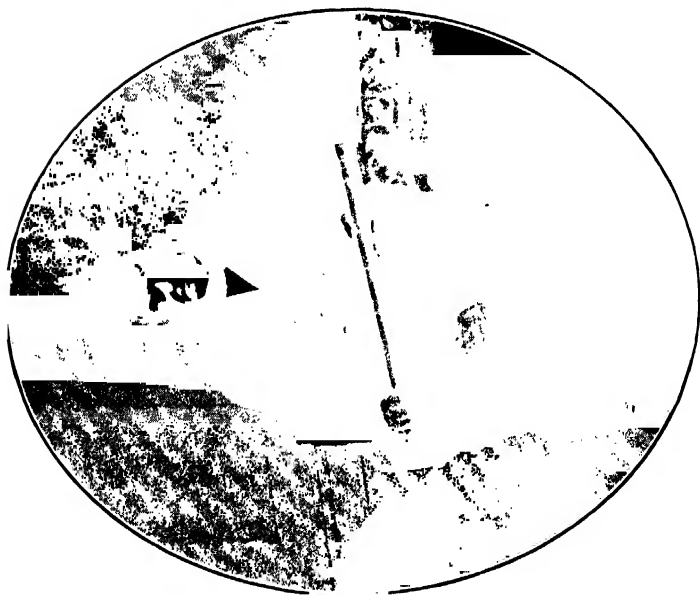
Also she will have the pleasure of seeing her portrait in every printshop in Newcastle.

Remember us to Mrs. Maule and Mrs. Carr, Thomasin and all the family. I delivered the money to Robert the day after I arrived here and he is very well.

And remain dear cousins,  
Yours very respectfully,  
THOMAS BROWN.

Mr. Brown had evidently paid a visit to the Longstone, and Grace, in her good nature, had, as obviously, promised a visit. The Darlings had sent money to their son Robert as was their custom when a carrier presented himself. Robert was married and established at Newcastle, and when George Alexander went to work with a shipwright of that city, apparently he lodged with his brother. George Alexander, too, perceived his sister's portrait everywhere, and read the many various accounts of her doings in the public prints. Even the doings of the Darling boys sometimes "got into the papers" through their connection with the heroine. The vast sums being collected for Grace were also advertised, and it is not to be wondered at that the young Darlings began to look upon Grace as a person of considerable affluence. The twins had been Grace's special charge and when George Alexander found himself in financial difficulties, what more natural than for him to turn to Grace?

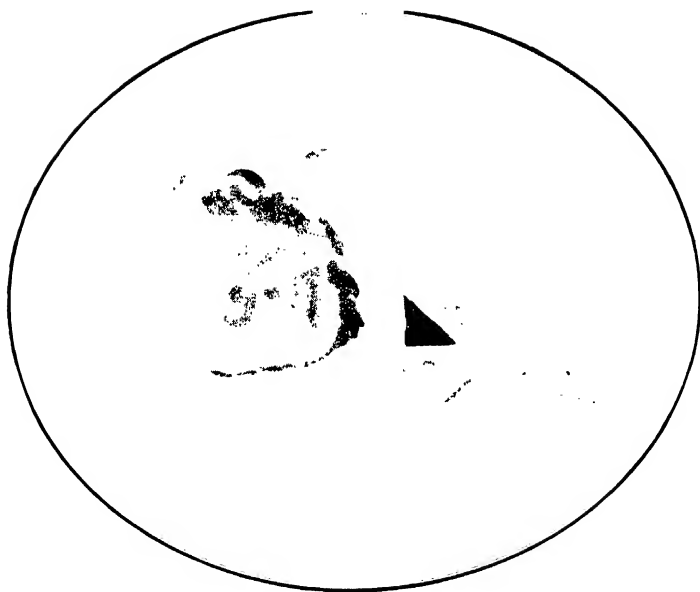
But Grace and her father regarded the money that had come to them as a solemn responsibility and the last thing in their minds was to spend it. Everything received was paid in to the General Funds about which the Duke was busying himself. Grace never regarded the money as her private property, and it never affected the Darlings' mode of living or general status. Everything in their home life continued just the same. William Darling had just as much difficulty in keeping his boys clothed and getting work for them, and the boys had to get on as best they could in the straitened circumstances of the labouring classes in those days. George Alexander's letters give a vivid picture of the conditions of an apprentice, and shew that William Darling's children when out in the world, turned to him with exactly the same confidence and recognition of his authority as when they were on the Longstone. They also give



In his Trinity Uniform.

WILLIAM DARLING

*From photos lent by relatives, Grace Horsley Darling and John Air.*



In his Sealskin Cap.



amusing glimpses of the publicity that Grace was receiving, and which extended apparently to the concerns of her brothers.

From George Darling to his Father and Mother.

Dear Father and Mother,

May 19th, 1839.

I take the pleasure of writing to you hoping to find you in good health as it leaves me at present thank God. . . . I have got lodgings in Tyne St. with one Hunter, and I am very comfortable, and I stand my work much better than I thought I could. I got all of my clothes safe and was glad to hear you was all well for I seed in the papers that Sister Gracie had got her arm broken and some gentlemen had sent her some ointment to dress it with ; but I seed in the papers again to contradict it ; so that it had just been put in to make the ointment go down !

Dear Mother, you request me to write and let you know whether I am married or not for you seed it in the papers ; but you must not mind all you see in newspapers. I can safely say in the Almighty's presence that I am not married, and it is a very rare case that I ever see one of them. (*i.e. young ladies*).

Dear Father and Mother, I will send you some more of my clothes to put right for me which is far better than doing them here, for really everything is here just to look at but not to buy. The butcher's meat is 8/9 per lb. and flour is raised this week again. There is to be a meeting on the moor on Whit Monday and all the carpenters is going to walk round the town so that it will be a great day, I amongst them.

Dear Mother and Father, I will stand in need of some white shirts and two suits of clothes this summer ; but I would rather you would buy them yourself, Mother, and just get what you think proper yourself, for I don't want to have anything to do with the buying of them myself at all, as you can buy them as cheap there and far better judges than me. . . . Mother you will find some of my clothes very bad but you must make the best of them you can.

Dear Father, I hope Mr. Hopper will give you a correct account of what money you sent him for what has come against me ; he has all the accounts of it so therefore he has it all in his own hands. . . . I must leave off as I have to write to Brooks and Gracie this time. . . .

George was only nineteen and this was his first experience in a city. He and William Brooks, the youngest of the family, had been greatly petted. His father did not reply, but Grace did ; and George proceeded to write to Grace, his sympathiser and confidante. A public character she might be, but her duty to her brothers was to repair their clothes, and now, to George's thinking, she ought also to help him with his debts.

From George Darling  
to Grace Darling.

Dear Sister,

May 27th, 1839.

I got your letter, and I was disappointed at Father not writing too, and I thought to myself I knew the reason of it so therefore I could

not help it. I was sorry to hear you could not do something for me, only that I send you the things.

But dear Sister, it is not so much that I need the things, (therefore you know the reason of my not sending them). It is only about 30/- altogether that I owe, but it is too much for me to make up . . . else Sister, you know I would never have asked you to do such a thing. It is to two or three persons that I am in debt, and the way that things is now, I get nothing from the masters at all for they pay for my lodging and washing and I have nothing through my fingers at all.

Dear Sister, write immediately and let me know everything that you can tell me, and if you can do any thing send it with the Carrier and direct it to me with Hopper, Shipwright, Tyne St.

Dear Sister, you must send my things as soon as possible, I got all of the rest safe. Just mend them the best way you can. There will be . . . (illegible) . . . for you, and a pair of gloves for Mother to put on when she goes on shore, and something for Brooks and Father.

Your affectionate brother,  
GEORGE.

Warmhearted and generous as all the Darlings were, George Alexander concluded with the mention of the gifts he is sending with the clothes for Grace to mend.

George Alexander grew up to be a fine-looking man, universally respected and liked in North Sunderland, where he finally settled as ship's carpenter. To him was left the famous boat in which the journey to the *Forfarshire* was made.

Meanwhile Grace was receiving flattering invitations from the Mayor of Newcastle to visit the City as his private guest, and receive the sum subscribed for her in person.

From W. Headlam to Grace Darling.

15 Northumberland Street, Newcastle-on-Tyne,

Dear Madam,

February 28th, 1839.

I have the satisfaction to inform you that I presided this day at a meeting of the Committee appointed to conduct the subscription entered into in this town to express the sense entertained of the heroic conduct of Yourself and your Father and the meritorious conduct of other persons who assisted in saving the lives of the unfortunate persons on board of the *Forfarshire* Steamer. The sums being apportioned to Yourself and your Father the Committee feel anxious to pay the money to Yourself in person, and I have therefore to request you will do me the favour to come to my house any day most convenient to Yourself. If your Father comes with you I shall be glad to offer you bed and a quiet residence till I can summon the Committee to visit you.

I am, Madam,  
Your faithful Servant,  
W. HEADLAM (Mayor).

A visit to Newcastle was a great temptation. There was the Hancock Museum, promising a wealth of interest, and so many friends to visit. The names of the Founders and Promoters of the Natural History Society figured prominently on the list of subscribers to the Darling Fund. Difficult as it was to get away, William Darling plainly hesitated to refuse.

To Mr. Headlam, Mayor of Newcastle, From William Darling,  
Longstone.

Kind Sir,

March 22nd, 1839.

I only recd. yours yesterday it having been detained at No. Sunderland with bad weather. In answer to which we are very much at a loss for I think it would not be advisable for my daughter to come herself and I am in such a confined situation that the agent has it not in his power to grant leave of absence but in case of sickness or something similar. I got leave to go to Alnwick when she recd. Her Majesty's present and managed to keep unknown till the last 25 minutes when the house was immediately filled and the street nearly so before we could get off entirely from Publick Curiosity and kindness; and I feel certain that if I had stopped a short time longer it would have been attended with a great deal of inconvenience both to ourselves and some of our dear Friends and think it likely it would be more so in Newcastle so that our Friends would have troublesome visitors. But if you think it can not be done otherwise I will (try) to get leave about the first week in April and will (bring) her sufficiently near to be ready to wait on the Committee.

Apparently the Mayor replied to William Darling with pleased anticipation. But in the meantime other letters from Newcastle had been arriving at the lighthouse. Bearing in mind the recent strictures in the papers about Grace's proposed exhibition of herself at Batty's Circus, the Darlings' friends at Newcastle obviously feared her appearance would incite criticism, even though she only met the Committee at Mr. Headlam's private residence. It will be noted Mr. Henry Hewitson is mentioned as advising to the contrary.

In her father's second letter to the Mayor there is a note of defence, an insistence on Grace's hatred of notoriety, which indicates the several letters advising her not to go, have roused the pride of the old gentleman, and yet, how disarming is his conclusion, "I should be very much grieved not to do what is right."

From William Darling  
to Mayor Headlam, Newcastle,  
Kind Sir,

April 11th, 1839.

I have received your very kind letter and I assure you that I am very much afraid of appearing ungrateful to those friends who have been so good to us but hope they will not be offended at my appearing unwilling to see them and to thank them for their great kindness to my daughter and myself. You can hardly form an idea how disagreeable it is to my daughter to show herself in publick, I believe very



much from being brought up in such a retired situation ; she has avoided it as much as possible but you cannot believe how much she has been annoyed by it all. She has consulted her friends and they all advise to keep as private as possible. She has already refused to go to the Trinity, to Edinburgh and to Hull to receive presents and she thinks with me that she could not go to Newcastle without giving offence to a great many friends who have been interested about her. I hope you will think so too and not insist upon her seeming to refuse which she would be very sorry to do.

We have several letters with the advice and the last from a dear and kind friend though no relation, Mr. H. Hewitson. I hope you will excuse my manner and please to write me again and tell me what you still wish us to do for I should be very much grieved not to do what is right. I am sir, with Desire to be

your most Hl. and Obt. Servant,

The Mayor took this in good part.

WM. DARLING.

From T. E. Headlam  
to Wm. Darling.

Newcastle,  
April 25th, 1839.

Dear Sir,

I received your letter of the 11th of April in which you fully explained to me the motives which induced you to decline accepting the invitation I had sent you. I should have been much gratified by a visit from you and your daughter, but I beg to assure you that I consider the reasons you have stated for not coming to Newcastle perfectly satisfactory, and that Miss Darling has shown much judgment and good sense in avoiding the public expression of feeling in her favour. It now remains for me to inform you that the sums according to the annexed statement have been apportioned to Miss Darling and yourself and the Boat's crew by the Committee appointed to manage the subscription, and that they are placed to the credit of the several parties in the bank of Sir M. Ridley and Co. The money will be paid on application to the Bank or to the Agent at Alnwick, and I have to request that you will give this information to the Boat's crew at North Sunderland. With much respect to yourself and daughter, I am, dear Sir, Yours faithfully,

T. E. HEADLAM.

Extract from the draft of a letter signed by Wm. Darling and bearing the date May 4th, 1839 :

Dear Sir,

I recd. your letter of the 25th ult. and was very glad that you approved our way of acting. I therefore with my daughter return our most grateful acknowledgements to the Committee and Subscribers . . . wish to thank Mr. Headlam in particular. . . ."

When one looks back to the first days of Grace's fame, only a few months ago, one begins to visualize the immense disturbance that had occurred in Grace's life. Their island rock had suddenly revealed

itself as a volcano in eruption, an eruption that would not cease but continued to increase in violence. Grace, sensitive, reserved and honourable, with the keenest sense of self-respect, found herself in a flaming crater of suspicion that seared and shrivelled her most sacred feelings. When the Darlings' natural kindliness, strong desire to express their gratitude, and deep-rooted respect for those they thought their betters, prompted them, at the greatest personal inconvenience, to strive to do what was required, Grace was accused of vanity, vulgarity, and self-exploitation.

A more pressing invitation now, however, followed. In the great wave of compassion for sufferers by sea, Hull had been on the topmost crest. In merchant ships as in the Royal Navy conditions then were shameful, it was an accepted fact that sailors neither desired nor appreciated comfort or decency. At sea or on shore, they were regarded as pariahs. In 1821, in Hull, the birthplace of Wilberforce, the emancipator, the Port of Hull Society was formed to free the sailor and reform conditions. The first centre of the work was in an old vessel, the *Valiant*, moored in the Queen's Dock. There services were held, a library installed, portable libraries lent to ships, a school opened where geography, mathematics and navigation were taught and lads and men fitted to attain the dignity of Master Mariners.

In 1836 several Hull vessels were lost and many widows and children left uncared for. Grace's deed in 1839 had inspired the founding of the Shipwrecked Mariners Society, and now the public compassion and enthusiasm pushed the Port of Hull Society into a scheme for clothing and educating sailors' orphans, and also for a Sailors' Institute, the first in the Kingdom, which was subsequently opened in Waterhouse Lane.

A grand Bazaar was planned, and the presence of Grace Darling was considered all-important. How natural to write to Grace Darling pointing out the urgent need of benevolence to shipwrecked mariners. Surely Grace Darling would understand and would respond. How could they take refusal when if she could only realize the importance of a Sailors' Home where sailors could be taken in and cared for. . . . Probably Grace received many invitations to public gatherings, but this one was so different.

The good people of Hull wrote again and again to her, trying to awaken her to the peculiar fitness of her presence at their Bazaar. It never occurred to them that since her birth Grace had been brought up to minister to shipwrecked mariners, in a permanent Sailors' Home; that the whole energies of Grace and her family had been, were, and always would be devoted to the succour of sailors and that the impassioned appeals of the Port of Hull Society fell on her ears much as would the appeal of a Bazaar committee striving to arouse a man in the trenches to the needs of our brave Tommies at the Front.

Grace was in the very thick of the battle and could not possibly give up her job to rouse other people to a sense of their duty. She had all she could manage to attend to her own.

But the promoters were indefatigable.

The *Forfarshire* had sailed from Hull and Hull would respond to Grace's personal appeal. Grace gives the date as March 13th, and it is possible the invitation to her was originally for that date.<sup>1</sup>

Extract from the *Eastern Counties Herald, Hull and General Advertiser*, April 22nd, 1841.

"PORT OF HULL BAZAAR. The bazaar in aid of the funds of the Port of Hull Society, and the Sailors' Orphan Institution connected therewith, was held on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday<sup>1</sup> in last week, in the Public Rooms, Kingston Square, under the illustrious and distinguished patronage of the Queen Dowager, the Countess Stratmore, Lady Wenlock, Lady Sheffield, Lady Strickland, Lady Lowthrop, and Mrs. Bentinck, and was attended by about two thousand persons.

There was also a letter from Grace Darling, who had been invited, very modestly stating the reason of her absence."

If to leave home for Newcastle was impossible, how could Grace be spared to go to Hull? But the invitations were so persistent, and the signatories so important, that Grace for the first time took shelter behind her *Guardian*. But having done so, the more Grace thought over what she had done, the more unpardonable seemed the liberty she had taken, and she wrote to the Duke to pour out her contrition and explain the whole affair as best she could. Her gratitude to the kind promoters of the bazaar for not being angry at her refusal, was very characteristic.

From Grace Darling  
to Mrs. Craggs, Hull.

Longstone,

September 1st, 1841.

Dear Madame,

I recd. yours requesting my attendance at the Bazaar, Hull, but having been requested to go to so many different places for different purposes which could not be done for many reasons, His Grace Duke of Northd. My Principal Trustee told me to refer all such letters to him but having received a second from Sir Wm. Lowthrop, I suppose he must not have heard from His Grace. I believe he would receive an immediate answer that would explain the business much better than I can. But I think my presence at the Bazaar would be calculated to do more harm than good at present.

I can only wish it every success which so good a cause certainly deserves.

I remain a sincere well-wisher

And your Hl. servant,

From Grace Darling  
to the Duke of Northumberland.

GRACE H. DARLING.

My Lord Duke,

As I wish to let my *Guardian* know that some time since I was obliged to make use of your Grace's name in respect of me not visiting Hull, I was afraid they might trouble your Grace about it.

<sup>1</sup> Dates of the Bazaar: 13th, 14th, 15th April, 1841.

I have had six letters from them, requesting my attendance at the bazaar which was to be held March 13th, for the benefit of seamen and their orphan children, which I declined going, as it could not be done without a great deal of inconvenience both to myself and my father and mother; but having received a second letter from — and the same from —, Secretary to the Bazaar, I wrote letters to each of them saying that I referred all such letters to the Duke of Northumberland, my principal Trustee. They not only wrote to me, but to two of their friends in the north to try and persuade me to go; but since the bazaar has been held some of them sent me newspapers which was very satisfactory to us to see that they were not offended by me refusing to go. . . .

We join in humble duty to Duke, Duchess and young Ladies.

I have the honour to be,

My Lord Duke's humble Servant,

G. H. DARLING.

The Duke's reply has not come to light. We can be sure it was of a reassuring character. The Duke would by no means object to opportunities for playing his role as Guardian. He liked to guard, he enjoyed being the final Court of Appeal, and Grace's last days would have been happier if she could have understood that both the Duke and Duchess knew so much about the world, that they recognized the rare people who ranked above the world's powers of classification. They trusted Grace with their genuine, spontaneous affection; it is a pity Grace could never bring herself to return their trust in kind.

But the family never alluded to the Duke amongst themselves. What was the cause of the complete silence preserved about the visits to the Castle or the letters from the Duke, in all the family correspondence with one exception? Surely, Grace's visits to the Castle would be a matter of interest to the uncles, aunts and cousins, and the brothers at Newcastle? But any reference to the unique relations between Grace and the Duke seems to have been carefully and consistently avoided.

One of Grace's relatives writes that the Duke and Duchess, with the limited understanding of their class, could not grasp the intense pride and independence of the Darlings. When the Duke and Archdeacon Thorp took it on themselves to deal with the affairs which should properly have been in William Darling's hands, he stepped aside. The money collected was in the nature of a public trust and if the Duke considered himself the proper person to represent the public, William Darling was acquiescent. But the family probably thought Mr. Darling would have been quite capable of managing Gracie's affairs. The large sum of money given to Grace in comparison to that subscribed for her father, was an uncomfortable fact, best not thought about.

The family was particularly self-contained, and all the family values and relationships continued as usual. Mr. and Mrs. Darling were the chief figures there, and Mr. Darling, above all, was the leading figure. For Grace to be exalted to a level with her father seemed as absurd

to her as to her mother and sisters and brothers : in a vague way, her family felt the public exaltation of Grace reflected unfairly on their parents. Many years after in the *True Story* Thomasin takes pains to show that her mother's deed in launching the boat, and what her mother faced when she was left alone at the lighthouse, the prey of her terror and anxiety about Grace and her father, was far more of an ordeal than Grace experienced.

One letter exists, however, referring to " the Castle."

The Duke's attention and kind thought for them all might be an honour, but honours can weigh heavy.

Poor Grace ; the Heroine and Ducal Ward ; summoned to the Castle on her adored brother's wedding-day !

Poor William Darling, faced with his duty as keeper of the light, and Brooks' father, and with the world and the Duke regarding him as Grace's appendage !

From Wm. Darling  
to Thomasin Darling.

Longstone, October 26th, 1840.

Dear Thomasin,

I received yours this instant concerning Grace coming to the castle which is very inconvenient for us as W. Brooks is just going on shore to be married and she cannot well stop all the night, but please God the weather be possible we will be on shore to-morrow or first good day.

N.B. Should the weather become bad that I do not get on shore in time for the rent you will ask Mr. Smeddle if he pleases to lend you money to pay Mary Ann's rent and give up the house at the same time to be cleared at May next : we are well, your afft. Father

WM. DARLING.

**PART FOUR**  
**HERSELF**

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

### HER TRUSTEES :

HIS GRACE THE THIRD DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

THE VENERABLE DR. THOMAS THORP, Archdeacon of Durham.

THE VEN. THOMAS SINGLETON, Archdeacon of Northumberland.

THE REV. WILLIAM NICHOLAS DARNELL.

### HER LAWYERS :

WILLIAM DICKSON } Messrs. Thorp and Dickson.  
THOMAS THORP }

W. C. WALTERS, Barrister-at-Law, Newcastle.

MR. STAMP.

MR. WILLIAM THOMPSON, of North Sunderland.

MR. ANDREW GORDON.

MR. WALKER }  
MR. BURGESS } Agents for Trinity.  
MR. HOWIE }  
MR. DUNCAN }

CAPT. SIR JOHN PELLEY, Deputy Master for Trinity.

CAPT. WATSON.

GEORGE SHIELD, of Wooler.

JOHN AND ANN MACFARLANE, of Alnwick.

G. M. REYNOLDS, of London.

JERROLD VERNON, of Newcastle.

B. R. GOOCH.

EVA HOPE.

JOSEPH LIVESEY.

MR. BARNFATHER.

MISS ANNA MARIA ST. PAUL.

## CHAPTER THIRTY-ONE

### A DUCAL GUARDIAN

**W**HILE the Duchess formed a very favourable opinion of Grace and shewed her warm friendship and approval to the end, the Duke conducted all the correspondence with his Ward.

During the spring and summer of 1839, the Funds were steadily increasing in their various centres. 1839 was the year of the Chartist Riots and the Cotton Strike, a time of an almost complete paralysis of trade and great industrial distress, and the sums raised were, therefore, very creditable.

Grace and her people were not accustomed to deal with investments and securities, banking and receipts and such like, and the Duke decided she must have Trustees to deal with all her money matters. The public desired Grace's entire future to be safe; she was young, comely and unusually attractive; marriage seemed inevitable, but the Third Duke had no confidence in Grace's choice of a husband, even with her father's guidance. She needed Trustees to tie up her money in such a way that no husband could ever get her money into his possession even if he survived her. Grace's children must inherit it.

The Duke was used to marriage settlements; Grace's money was to be settled on her subject neither to parental or marital control. This was a very progressive attitude applied to a woman of the working classes, especially as Northumbria was very backward with regard to the financial status of its women. Men did not leave money to their women-kind in their wills. Daughters, wives and mothers were considered the lowliest of dependants.

But the House of Northumberland had been twice continued through the female line; through the female line, the Percy estates had been preserved to them; the Third Duke insisted now upon Justice to Grace and full protection of her rights. For that it would be necessary, in his opinion, to take her property out of her hands and place it in the keeping of Trustees of a rank befitting the importance of a Ducal Ward. The Duke selected the most eminent of the Crewe Trustees. The chief of these was the Venerable Dr. Thorp, Archdeacon of Durham, the first Warden of the University of Durham. As Crewe Trustee Archdeacon Thorp took his duties very seriously, and his term of residence at Bambergh Castle was always looked forward to with feelings of pleasure by the villagers, for he never failed to discover something by which the comfort of the cottagers would be improved; Archeacon Thorp was also



keenly interested in preserving the sea-birds on the Farnes, many species of which had been almost exterminated by shooting parties and wholesale plundering of the eggs in the breeding season. He kept a watcher in spring and summer and permitted no one to land without an order; forbade shooting by visitors, also the removal of the eggs; that so his ownership of and interest in the Farnes made the Duke's choice particularly appropriate. He was also greatly appreciative of thrift. Through a sermon the Archdeacon preached to a Friendly Society at Gateshead, the first Savings Bank was established in the North of England.

A fine print of the Archdeacon is preserved in the British Museum; a typical Northumbrian with dark thick eyebrows, somewhat cautious but very straightforward eyes, and a firm pleasant mouth with great simplicity of expression. He looks kind, remarkably unselfconscious, honest, capable and yet a little withdrawn and sceptical.

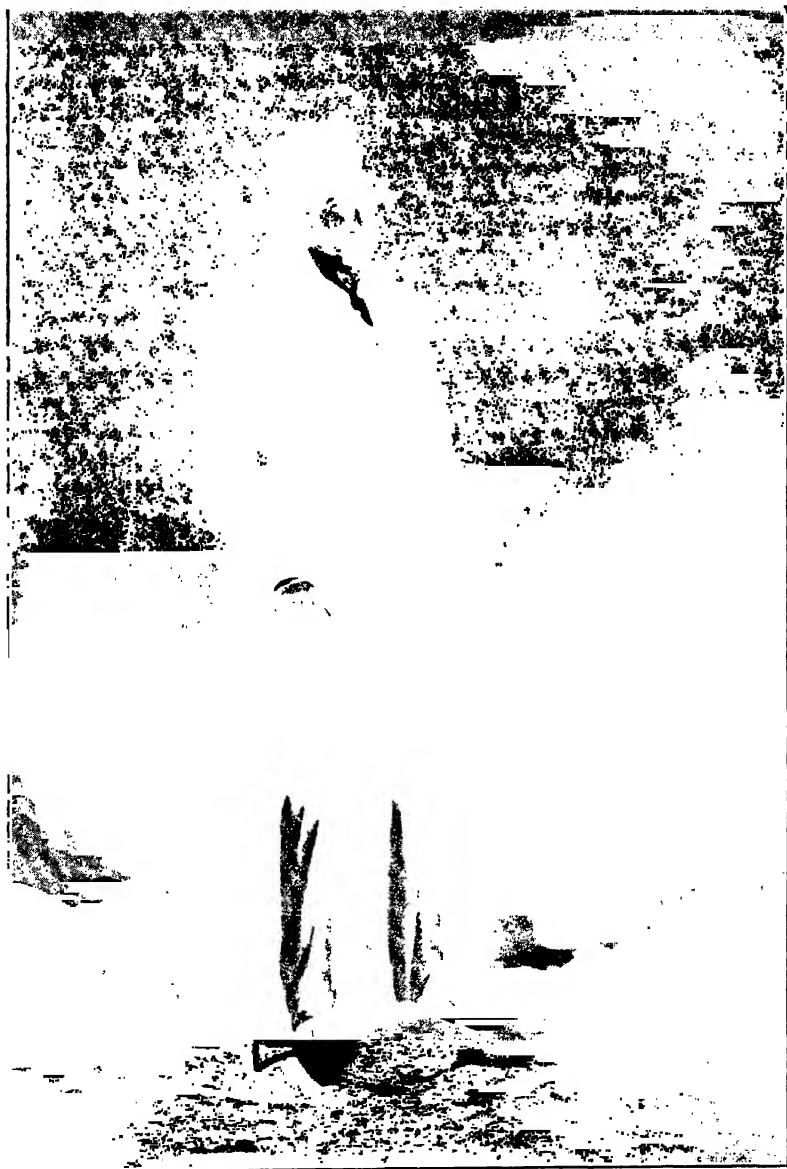
The second Trustee was the Rev. William Nicholas Darnell, also of Durham Cathedral, and also interested in the welfare of the humbler classes; he had instituted a prize fund to encourage the study of the Prayer Book in the parochial schools. At Oxford, the Rev. Wm. Darnell had been John Keble's tutor who dedicated a volume of Sermons to him "in memory of invaluable helps and warnings received from him in youth." His son married Archdeacon Thorp's grand-daughter, Frances, and became incumbent of Bamburgh.

Lastly, the Duke appointed the Rev. Thomas Singleton, Archdeacon of Northumberland, a friend of the Duke's when they were boys at Eton, then his tutor at Cambridge, and his private secretary in France and Ireland. Here was Grace, therefore, with the Duke of Northumberland, the Archdeacon of Northumberland, the Archdeacon of Durham and the Reverend Darnell as her Trustees!

Mr. Smeddle continued to be the Darlings' representative at Bamburgh, and we begin the story of legal and financial complications which had their full share in the worrying of Grace into the grave.

All these formalities were nothing to a Duke; born and brought up in an atmosphere of title deeds and trusts and investments, money to him was primarily something that existed for the purpose of being transmitted to descendants. The Trust in the Duke's mind must combine the functions of a marriage settlement and a will. Its chief purpose was to make the money secure *after* Grace's lifetime for every contingency that might affect her heirs.

Archdeacon Thorp was the principal trustee next to the Duke; he it was to whom the Duke transmitted the ducal views and decisions when His Grace himself did not personally conduct the correspondence. It is of interest to see how much more seriously the Duke took his office as trustee than did the Archdeacon. When the Duke writes, one perceives the gravity that inspired his cogitations in every weighty line of his beautifully penned notes. The Archdeacon was a cousin of Tom Thorp, the partner of the Archdeacon's son-in-law, Wm. Dickson of Thorp and Dickson, the Duke's solicitors, and when he dashes off an almost illegible scribble to his "dear Tom," Grace's affairs get the curtest



THE THIRD DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND, GRACE DARLING'S  
GUARDIAN

*Print Room, British Museum.*



and briefest attention among his family matters and anything else that interests him. The Duke himself sometimes adds a remark or question of a personal nature to his official notes. When one reads this yellowed bundle of notes and jottings and drafts of deeds and clauses the essentially homely and intimate character of the relationship between the Castle, the Cathedral, and the fine old firm of family solicitors comes out.

A year had elapsed since the Funds had started and the Duke rightly felt everything must be collected now and settled up. Archdeacon Thorp wrote to the Duke's solicitors to take action.

From Archdeacon Thorp  
to Thorp and Dickson.

My dear Tom,

College, October 25th, 1839.

It is the wish of the Duke of Northumberland in which the Trustees entirely concur that the *Forfarshire* Fund be immediately divided, and invested according to the Duke's letter which I enclose. A sum of £335 appears to be in our disposal in three shares, one for Grace Darling, one the Father and one for the 7 boatmen. Grace's money is to be settled on herself her heirs and assigns, but the Trustees are to have the power of advancing £200 for marriage or any other occasion. The Trustees in this settlement are to be the Duke, Darnell, and myself and Singleton if he pleases.

Mr. Smeddle will ascertain the amount of the monies in Bank to be received, correctly, and you will please to prepare the deeds and have them executed with as little delay as may be. The Darlings ought to see them. Please return me the Duke's letters.

I am anxious for better accounts of my brother.

Ever Yrs. affect.,

CHAS. THORP.

I have not yet found a Curate. There is great impatience in Chapter about the sale of the Salmon Fishery Lease, so let us have a report as soon as possible. And Darnell wants Singleton's appointment. Send it him and you will have 2 names. But perhaps you must see the Execution of the investment.

Sgd. C.T.

From Archdeacon Thorp  
to Thorp & Dickson.

College, Durham,

My Dear Tom,

November 1st, 1839.

Many thanks for two very beautiful glasses the produce of Mr. B.'s sale, which arrived here in safety, and are only too good for our use. But I value them beyond all use as being your taste and your present.

*Darling Fund.*

It is too much for you to give your trouble for nothing, Mr. Dickson. I entirely approve the charge of stamps, etc., etc., upon the sum invested. Smeddle must undertake to communicate with the Islands, you must not think of crossing at this time of year.

*Singleton's Appointment.*

May come first here and the sooner the better. Dr. Redford

approves and will sign. Darnell is expected in College in a few days.

I shall be glad to divide the salmon and hope you will have a good trip to-morrow. Young Mitson heard of a Durham Scholarship at Lincoln College on Wednesday, was off on Thursday, and expects to walk over the course. There is a second which Davidson might have had if time and notice had been given and for which Charles<sup>1</sup> should have offered himself at 17. The Army is the worst of all professions, idleness and vanity in youth, stress in the soul in old age.

Jane and Mary Ann D. are dining with us—Lily Dickson has mild Measles.

Ever yours affect'y,  
(sgd.) CHARLES THORP.

The Trust Deed was sent to a Newcastle Barrister-at-Law, W. C. Walters. In the *True Story of Grace Darling*, the statement is made that his services were gratuitous, but the firm of Thorp and Dixon paid him a fee of two guineas. They themselves, however, in spite of the Archdeacon's direction, made no charge for their services. Their letter to Mr. Walters indicates the care which was taken of the parents' rights in the matter.

From Thorp and Dickson  
to W. C. Walters, Esq., Newcastle-on-Tyne.

Dear Sir,

Alnwick, November 25th, 1839.

Inclosed we send insts to draw deed of Sett.t. of Grace Darling's money. You will be so good as make the father (and perhaps the mother) a party to show his approbation altho the young lady is of age. Of course the shares of Old Darling and the boatmen are not to be settled at all (i.e. in this Settlement).

When you return the papers pray request your Clerk to let us know what fees are due to you from us.

We are, Dear Sir,  
Yours faithfully,  
THORP & DICKSON.

From the Duke of Northumberland  
to Grace Darling, Longstone  
Lighthouse.

Alnwick Castle,  
December 16th, 1839.

Grace Darling,

I have desired your father to shew you a statement of the money which is due to be paid to you by the Trustees, and also a Plan proposed for securing your money on conformity with what I understand to be your wish. The sum of £725 to be secured in the 3½ public funds (with the exception of £200 which is to be reserved for your own use) and the interest to be paid regularly to you during your life.

If your Father or Mother should survive you, then the Interest of your money would be paid to them during their lives.

<sup>1</sup> The Archdeacon's son.

Afterwards your money would be paid in such portions to your children (if you should marry and have any)—or to such of your relatives as you may *by will* appoint.

If you do not make a will then it would be paid in equal shares to your children (if any)—or otherwise it would go to your nearest of kin. If you have any money of your own, beside the above mentioned £725 it might be added to it and invested in the public funds.

When you send an answer, let me know whether I can be of any use, as I shall be most ready to give you every assistance and believe me,

Your sincere friend,

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Very soon a problem arose which shewed the value of having Trustees. The ladies of Edinburgh were taking Grace's future very much to heart. Fame, friends and fortune now were hers, but what of her old age? The ladies of Edinburgh were anxious that their contribution should ensure an annuity of at least five pounds to Grace for her own use, and maintenance in her old age, so, at the end of January 1839, Miss Catherine Sinclair wrote to Grace with the information that more than eighty pounds had been collected for her, and very cannily suggested that as other money collected elsewhere had been forwarded, the result of the Edinburgh subscription might be deposited at interest to accumulate during the ensuing five years to the sum of about one hundred pounds. The Edinburgh ladies wished, however, before doing this to consult the wishes of Grace Darling herself.

Grace's faith in Providence was too profound for her to worry about her future, but this business of putting money out to interest was beyond her comprehension. Money in the Duke's keeping, and the Trustees' keeping, appeared to grow in some miraculous manner. The chief thing about money was that on no account must you disturb this growing process. You handed it over, somewhere, to someone who understood its culture, and there you left it reverently and respectfully.

The ladies of Edinburgh evidently knew all about the peculiar properties of money and its increase if left in the right hands. How gladly and gratefully Grace wrote to assure the ladies their wish could be executed now by her Trustees. The draft was thereupon forwarded direct to Grace. Miss Sinclair and the ladies were very desirous that Grace herself should receive the draft, *to do what she liked with*, especially now they knew of her very proper and characteristic good sense which would pass on the draft at once to the Trustees.

Grace replied, with the help of her father. His voice is heard in the beginning of the simple little note. It is possible that even their obliged humble servant, or perhaps, their humble servant's father, desired the Edinburgh ladies to know their draft was not the only provision for Grace's old age. But one can be quite sure Grace herself added the final paragraph. She must shew her gratitude for all the trouble the ladies had taken, in some way or other; she chose the one that seemed to be most universally acceptable.

Miss Catherine Sinclair, 123 George Street, Edinburgh.

Dear Madam,

I recd. on the 28th inst. the enclosed draft of £84 10s. 7d. which had been detained at North Sunderland with bad weather, for which I beg to return my most sincere thanks, and was very sorry I could not answer yours with the same boat as the weather is very bad ; perhaps it will be interesting to my kind friends in Edinburgh to know that the sums collected for me alone will amount to about seven hundred pounds. Please to accept of a small lock of my hair as a small memorandum of your Ever

Obliged Hl. servant.

(GRACE DARLING).

Longstone Light, January 29th, 1840.

The trouble the ladies of Edinburgh had taken was to be equalled by the trouble the Duke, and the Trustees, and Messrs. Thorp and Dickson and Mr. Smeddle were now to take about the eighty-four pounds, ten shillings and sevenpence.

First Grace wrote about it to the Duke, who wrote to Messrs. Thorp and Dickson. (The Duke's keen interest in politics cannot be suppressed.)

From the Duke of Northumberland

to Messrs. Thorp and Dickson,  
Bailiffgate.

Alnwick Castle,

February 10th, 1840.

Dear Sirs,

The sum sent by the ladies of Edinburgh £84 10s. 7d., is solely for Grace Darling.

Into what Fund is Darling's Money to be placed, or how is it to be applied ? I understood that he did not wish to receive the Interest but preferred that the money should accumulate at Compound Interest.

I was surprised to see Major H. Cadogan's Hand Bill. Do you hear what his chance of success is at Morpeth ?

Yours very truly,

(sgd.) NORTHUMBERLAND.

From the Duke of Northumberland

to Messrs. Thorp and Dickson,  
Alnwick.

Alnwick Castle,

February 17th, 1840.

My dear Sirs,

Although I conclude that Mr. Smeddle has made you acquainted with all the details relative to Darling and his daughter Grace Darling yet I may as well send you the corrected statement which I received from Darling on Saturday.

Darling Total amount sent to Mr. Stamp     £243 13s. od.

Grace Darling     £84 10s. 7d.

(from the ladies at Edinburgh) she has sent lately to Mr. Stamp in addition to the former sums which were deposited some time ago in his hands.

I will thank you to let me know whether the above is quite correct and in what securities the two sums it is proposed should be vested.

Yours very truly,  
(sgd.) NORTHUMBERLAND.

From the Duke of Northumberland  
to Grace H. Darling.

Alnwick Castle,  
February 18th, 1840.

Grace Darling,

I was much pleased with your letter (which though dated 24th of January did not reach me till the 14th of February) and I wrote to Messrs. Thorp and Dickson respecting the sum from the ladies of Edinburgh. I understand from them that W. Stamp has received the £84 10s. 7d.

I trust too that the whole of this business will be completely settled the beginning of March before I leave Alnwick.

I was glad to find that the teapot is used by your Mother—that the seal has not been lost, and that the party at the Longstone can recollect their friends even during the stormy weather.

If hearty good wishes could have prevailed I am certain I should not have been confined for so long a period. I was much disappointed that I could not go with Archdeacon Singleton to Bamburgh Castle but I will not despair of visiting the Longstone in the course of the summer. If your watch should require anything you may send it to me before the 16th of March and I will take it to the maker. I was glad to hear that you was in good health, and as cheerful, modest and natural as ever. Believe me Your sincere friend,

NORTHUMBERLAND.

But the ladies of Edinburgh were not to be disposed of by March. The Trust had been drawn up and the deed executed before their draft had finally arrived, and now their contribution could not be included in the Trust money without consulting Mr. Walters.

It will be noted that Dickson and Thorp wrote that Grace Darling's signature can be easily obtained.

Grace was always being summoned to the mainland now, there to wait about in case the Duke or the Trustees or the solicitors desired her presence at Alnwick, or desired Mr. Smeddle to have further conversation with her. In the eyes of the dignitaries who were dealing with her business, Grace had no duties or interests that needed consideration. There she was, always accessible (weather permitting), ready to leave her sewing or house-cleaning or cooking and come off to the main at a moment's notice. It never occurred to the gentlemen in Alnwick that the routine of the light-keeper's family was as important to them as the routine at the Castle or the College, and that is even more disturbing to humble people who are very set in their habits to be perpetually called away from their tasks.



From Thorp and Dickson  
to W. C. Walters, Esq.

Alnwick,  
July 20th, 1840.

Dear Sir,

Miss Grace Horsley Darling.

We trouble you with this draft in consequence of two further sums of

	£84 14s. 11d. and
	20 os. od.
making together	£104 14s. 11d.

having been added to the same stock in which the money named in the deed was invested. These two sums were not added to the stock until after the execution of the deed and as Miss Darling wishes the whole (including the two later sums) to be held upon the trusts of the deed, perhaps you will think it advisable to put an endorsement upon the deed, if the necessity of the Trustees signing can be avoided it will be well in consequence of the trouble of sending the deed.

So far, Miss Darling's signature can easily be obtained.

As all the sums are invested in the same stock in the names of the four Trustees and as the deed does not mention the amount of the stock but only of the sterling money, perhaps you may not think it necessary to have any endorsement.

We are, Dear Sir, Yours truly,

THORP & DICKSON.

The trust by now was drawn up, signed and sealed and delivered. The scheme that follows, set forth the main points clearly and if Grace had married or had had children, would have been a fair and proper disposition of her property.

But if she did not marry, or did not have children, it amounted to this, that Grace would never get more than approximately a quarter of what the public had subscribed for her alone ; most certainly not for her brothers and sisters and their children.

When the Duke looked at Grace, he saw heirs ; when the public sent its pence, and pounds, it saw her.

The effect of the Trust was to remove the money from Grace and make it her duty not to spend it.

*Proposed Scheme of Settlement of the Darling Fund.*

	£	s.	d.
Amount subscribed separately for Old Darling ..	63	0	0
Ditto for the Boatmen .. ..	49	0	0
Ditto for Grace Horsley Darling .. ..	613	0	0
<hr/>			
Amount in the hands of the Trustees of the fund over which they have discretionary power, and can divide as they please amongst the three parties above mentioned .. ..	335	0	0
Added by the Duke .. ..	1	0	0
Total to be divided by the Trustees .. ..	£336	0	0

The Trustees intend to divide this sum into three equal parts, viz :

To Old Darling .. .. .	112	0	0
To the Boatmen .. .. .	112	0	0
To Grace Horsley Darling .. .. .	112	0	0
	<u>£336</u>	0	0
Old Darling .. .. .	£63 and £112	175	0 0
The Boatmen .. .. .	£49 and £112	161	0 0
To Grace Horsley Darling .. .. .	£613 and £112	725	0 0
Total amount of Fund .. .. .		<u>£1,061</u>	0 0

It is not proposed to make any settlement of the money belonging to Old Darling, or the Boatmen.

It is proposed that Grace Horsley Darling should have absolute present power over £200, and that the remainder of the amount of her money should be tied up for the benefit of herself and her children ; and in order to carry this object into effect, it is intended,

That the total amount of her share, viz., £725 should be invested in the Funds (now  $3\frac{1}{2}$ —or  $3\frac{1}{2}$  reduced—as being less liable to fluctuation than the consols) in the names of, His Grace the Duke of Northumberland,

The Reverend William Nicholas Darnell.

The Venerable Archdeacon Thorp, and

The Venerable Archdeacon Singleton.

#### UPON TRUST

To raise £200 upon the request in writing made by Grace Horsley Darling, and pay the same as she may by writing direct.

(If it is not called for by Grace Horsley Darling in her lifetime then it is to be held upon same Trusts as the residue) To continue the Residue upon Government or real securities.

#### UPON TRUST

To pay the Interest to Grace Horsley Darling for her life, for her separate use, independent of any husband she may marry, after her decease,

To pay the principal monies to her children in such shares as may by deed or will appoint.

Failing any appointment,

To her children in equal shares.

If she dies without issue,

To pay the Interest to old Darling and his wife for their joint lives, and the life of the survivor, and after the decease of the survivor,

To pay over the principal to such persons as she may by deed or will appoint.

Failing any appointment,

To her next of kin, as if she had never been married.

Power to Grace Horsley Darling (whether she leaves children or not) by deed or will to give a life interest in the Trust promises to

## GRACE DARLING AND HER TIMES

any husband she may marry, but such life Interest not to commence until after the decease of her Father and Mother.

The children's portions to be vested at 21, and the Interest in the mean time to be applied to their maintenance.

The deed to contain all usual clauses of survivorship and accruer, and Indemnity to the Trustees.

Power to alter securities, but to be confined to real or government securities.

Power to appoint new Trustees by the survivors.

It will be seen that Grace's share is theoretically divided into her own two hundred pounds, and the remainder (five hundred and twenty-five) that belonged, as it were, to the Duke, the Archdeacons and the Revd. Darnell.

Messrs. Thorp and Dickson considered the interest on the two hundred ought to be added to the two hundred, so that Grace's own money should increase, as well as the money belonging to the Trust. They intimated that in a letter to Grace on October 28th. The Duke had returned to Alnwick, and Grace wrote to him about the matter. Grace's portion in the Trust at present was only five hundred and twenty-five pounds. The vision of the good round sum into which odd money grew, if interest was added on a compound basis, floated before old Darling's eyes.

If the ladies of Edinburgh's eighty-five pounds in five years would become a hundred, in what a little time five hundred and twenty-five pounds would become six hundred !

Obedient to her father, Grace communicated his desire to the Duke, she also saw Mr. Smeddle. But evidently Archdeacon Thorp was a little uneasy about the way all Grace's money was being decided from her. She was only twenty-three, and an intelligent girl ; at present she had no concept of a wider life and wider interests, but later on, whether she married or not, she might wake up to the need of money ; she might want to buy a home, a farm ; when Old Darling retired from the Longstone, or if he died, Grace would have to start life anew. But Grace stayed firm. The only authority she would bow to was the Duke.

From R. Smeddle  
to Thorp and Dickson.

Bamburgh Castle,  
November 9th, 1840.

Gentlemen,

Grace Darling was with me on Saturday last. It is her wish that the Interest should be added to the principal and that she had written instructions to Mr. Stamp to that effect. She perfectly understands that it will not be in her power to call for it at any future time. Therefore Mr. Stamp is correct in what he is doing. . . .

I am, Gentlemen,  
Your Obt. Svt.,  
(sgd.) R. SMEDDLE.

From the Duke of Northumberland  
to Archdeacon Thorp.

Alnwick Castle,  
December 8th, 1840.

Dear Sir,

I have received a letter from Grace Darling and of which I send you an extract herewith.

She sent me a letter from you to Mr. Smeddle explaining the effect of her orders to Mr. Stamp so that she might not place the Interest of her money in the hands of her Trustees and entirely out of her own power.

I do not quite know what the two sums are (£200 and £600) to which she alludes. If she is certain of not wanting more than £5 in each half year, she might add the remainder of Interest as it becomes due, to her own stock.

As Grace Darling says that she will be guided by my opinion I intend writing an explanation to her. I will therefore thank you to favour me with any remarks you may be disposed to make, after having perused the extract from Grace Darling's letter.

Believe me, My dear Sir,

Yours very truly,

(sgd.) NORTHUMBERLAND.

Extract referred to in letter of December 4th, 1840, from Alnwick Castle. Grace Darling says (alluding to Mr. Thorp's letter to Mr. Smeddle, October 28th) :

" It intimates that what Interest is remitted ought to be added to the £200, but my Father's idea was to get the Life Interest money to the round sum of £600 first.

" I will not need any Interest in January but perhaps I may want £5 in July, so that it would be a considerable time before it would amount to that sum."

From the Duke of Northumberland to Grace.

" Your Guardian highly approves of your adding to your Capital Fund whatever portion of the interest you can spare ; and he is much gratified to learn you continue the same happy, contented good daughter that you were before your prosperity."

Ten pounds a year ! What a charming allowance for a good humble daughter in Grace's class ! No desire for frivolity of dress or entertainment. The Duke was more and more pleased with his Ward.

From the Duke of Northumberland  
to Grace Darling.

Alnwick Castle,  
November 11th, 1840.

Grace Darling,

As I am sending a letter to your father I must enquire how my Ward is going on and whether she is in good health. I see by the newspapers that your brother who jumped first into the boat at North Sunderland, which went off to the wreck of the *Forfarshire*, is just married : are you likely to follow his example ?

I hope that the watch continues to go well, if it should want cleaning you may let me have it when I go to Town, and I will take care that it shall be safely returned to you. Have you had many visitors last summer in the steam-vessels at the Longstone Light ; and have you ever heard from any of the persons who were saved from the *Forfarshire* ?

With the best wishes of your Guardian.

NORTH.D.

From Wm. Darling  
to the Duke of Nd.

I will endeavour to answer your kind enquiries in my humble way. We are all well, and Grace is every way the same girl, and happy in her situation ; but I should very much like for her to see a little more of the World, but cannot see how it can be done, unless she was to get married, and that she cannot think of, for every time she goes on shore she gets a catalogue of this one and that other that has made such a bad job of it. But she is going to write herself.

Grace's reply was discretion itself. One thing was very clear in her letter and her father's letter : Grace had not the least desire to marry. Where would a husband rank amongst Mr. Smeddle, Messrs. Thorp and Dickson, her Trustees and the Duke ? A husband was supposed to be the master of his wife. She had enough masculine authority around her.

From Grace Darling  
to the Duke of Northumberland.  
My Lord Duke,

I received yours which you honoured me with, although dated 11th, it did not arrive here until the 24th, and beg to return you thanks for your kind proposal of the cleaning of my watch, but she still continues to go well. We have had our Trinity Gentlemen down here twice this season, in June and September, the first time they brought a Barometer and two thermometers which is to attend to 4 times in 24 hours, for which I find my watch particular useful. We had no pleasure parties with steam vessels, but have had a good many visitors in small parties. The last were Mr. and Mrs. — of — Castle, which I think to be very good people. After arriving home they forwarded me a letter, and a parcel containing a book of Sermons to my Father, and one to my Mother, Brother and widowed Sister, and myself ; and the North Sunderland Boatmen was not forgot, as they each received one. We have not heard from any of the persons which we saved from the wreck of the *Forfarshire*.

I beg you will let my kind friend the Duchess know I received lately a beautiful gold broach, inscribed outside, " From Mr. J. Dennet, Isle of Wight, to Miss Grace H. Darling " ; inside, " As a tribute to her unexampled Courage and Humanity in rescuing nine persons from the Wreck of the *Forfarshire* Steamer, Sept. 7th, 1838." . . . I have not got married yet (*and here she had first added*) for they say the man is master and there is much talk about bad

masters ; (*but, erasing this she substituted*) for I have heard people say there is luck in leisure.

I have the honour to be, my Lord Duke,

Yours most obedient Servant,  
G. H. DARLING.

## CHAPTER THIRTY-TWO

### THE BIRTH OF THE LEGEND

WHEN a wild creature of great rarity and beauty is discovered, it is considered a duty to humanity to exhibit it : that, however, does not make the process of exhibition less distasteful to the creature whose life is one with freedom and seclusion. Now that the Ducal favour was bestowed on her, Grace reached the summit of success and henceforth her life was regarded as a permanent public performance. The worst of it was, the very qualities and circumstances which made her shrink from notice were the greatest attractions to the public. Her modesty, her devotion to duty, her religious feelings, were all hailed enthusiastically, inflated and sentimentalized into a ridiculous travesty. If people marvelled that she remained modest under the shattering fire of eulogy, how much more marvellous that she remained free from self-dramatization or self-consciousness ! She saw the public folly as clearly as we do, to-day : only unfortunately she had no notion of how to deal with it, any more than had her family or the Duke.

"A good girl about whom a lot of nonsense was talked," was the private opinion of Archdeacon Thorp, but "a beautiful example of lowly virtue," was the amiable feeling of Archbishop Singleton and the Reverend Darnell. They sent for Grace on their periodic visits to Bamburgh Castle as the Crewe Trustees, and talked religion with her and were listened to attentively by Grace to whom a clergyman was sacred. But her religion had been a simple affair : now it was forced into hot-bed growth. Her deed was held to indicate abnormal piety, whereas Grace had merely let her heart get the better of her head, and certainly had never had the temerity to think of any special protection from the Deity when she went out. Her only thought had been to save her fellow beings from a dreadful end. Perfect love had cast out fear : but it is an equal truth that love seeketh not her own. While her venerable Trustees and myriads of unknown clergy were visiting and writing to her, Grace was shrinking from being a religious example as much as from being a public heroine.

A worse fate than either was before her : before her deed was a year old, she figured as the heroine of novels. Two appeared in 1839, by different writers : *Grace Darling or the Heroine of the Ferns Islands*, by G. M. Reynolds (London) ; and *Grace Darling or The Maid of the Isles*, by Jerrold Vernon (Newcastle).

The first was so glaringly untrue that its effect was negligible : it has

sunk into complete oblivion and even the British Museum does not possess a copy.

The second, published locally, is equally untrue, but unfortunately, with the farrago of nonsense about Grace's private life is interwoven a number of accounts of the wreck and meetings transcribed from local newspapers, thus colouring the work with an appearance of reality.

In consequence, Eva Hope and subsequent biographers took the Vernon novel as the foundation of their books, and the sentimental fiction about Grace, her friends, her family, and her surroundings have been accepted as history, and constitute the sole "facts" known about her.

Why did not her family and Grace protest?

They did, but to no purpose. Letters were sent, one at the dictation of Mr. Darling to the author of the Newcastle volume; one from Grace herself to an inquirer. But no steps were taken to stop the circulation of the book. Grace and her father were distressed but helpless. They had no knowledge of literary ways or customs: no acquaintance in literary circles. They did not know what to do!

A more amazing question arises as to why the Duke did not take action, for the Newcastle volume was prefaced by a fulsome dedication to the Duchess, and must have come before their notice. It is possible they considered the story a pleasant tribute to Grace, offering a praiseworthy example of rustic piety and virtue for general edification.

Whether the facts about her intimate private life were true or not, would not be known to such exalted personages; nor would they think the history of such humble people of great importance. So while the provisions for Grace's great-great-grandchildren were being meticulously considered, and the welfare of her watch was being sedulously attended to, her Guardian and Trustees allowed the nonsense about her life and family to pass into history, uncorrected.

### THE LONDON NOVEL.

G. M. Reynolds, author of *Grace Darling or the Heroine of the Fern Islands*, was no other than the founder of *Reynolds Newspaper*; he was at that time a young man of twenty-five who had come to London to seek his fortune by literary work. This took the form of stories of a highly sensational nature, nothing more nor less than paraphrases of the best sellers of the season. In the same year that his novel on Grace appeared (1839), he brought out *Pickwick Abroad*, in which all the characters in the *Pickwick Papers* were taken for a prolonged tour on the Continent. His novel on Grace is deeply influenced by *Oliver Twist* (1838), and the story is built round a villain's seduction of two blameless young ladies, sister and wife of the two heroes.

Not till the eighth chapter are Grace and her father introduced as making their first visit to London, Grace being seventeen years old. The seducer has just smote one of the heroes to the ground, "*Threading her way like a graceful fairy through the crowd, she hastened to administer to the wounded youth that succour which woman only knows how to offer.*"

. . . Her garb alone indicated the walk of life to which she belonged : otherwise, the unembarrassed gracefulness of her form, and the noble expression of her features would have stamped her as a companion for the highest ladies in the land." After she has bathed the wound and torn a white handkerchief into strips for a bandage " with sublime charity," Grace's



*..... This Daughter rowing to the wreck*

Frontispiece to a Novel by G. M. Reynolds (published 1839)  
*Grace Darling or the Heroine of the Farn Islands*  
 (By permission of the Hull Municipal Museum)

father is asked the name of the young person to whom Somerville is under such deep obligation, and replies :

" ' She is my daughter, sir, and has only done that which hundreds of others would have rejoiced to do in her situation.' "

" ' And yet there were perhaps other females older than her on the spot,' said Somerville, still retaining the old man's hand.



" ' *She stands aloof to avoid being thanked for this paltry act of charity,* ' " returned the old man, and gives her name, Grace Darling.

In the eleventh chapter we again meet Grace and her father where they are accosted by the seducer opposite the General Post Office in St. Martin's-le-Grand. Mr. Darling, in character, chats to him (" technically," says the author, bearing in mind the Darlings are connected with the sea).

" ' *May I enquire why you hove to and spoke to us if you ain't the cruiser that crippled the vessel Grace took under convoy?* ' " The seducer mysteriously exhibits a package of letters which Mr. Darling recognizes as despatches which he himself has brought to London, and delivered to the stranger's address. The contents of these letters are never disclosed. They are merely a link. On the seducer's departure, Grace treads on a ring which she remembers to have seen on the seducer's finger and which he must have inadvertently dropped.

Mr. Darling leaves the ring with Somerville who promises to hand it to the seducer, and then Mr. Darling returns to Grace who chants him a sea-ballad. The Darlings disappear from the story in favour of the adventures of Somerville and Co., until the fifteenth chapter, which Grace, still in the London lodging, opens with another sea-ballad, thus awakening her father, who enters and " *spins a yarn about the affair of the cutters against the two schooners.* "

" ' *You shall tell me the story once more as we sit at breakfast,* ' " says his most admirable of daughters.

After this Grace retires until the twenty-second chapter when the *Forfarshire* leaves Hull for Dundee with the two heroes on board, where they are exposed to the detailed dangers of the fateful voyage, and rescued from the wreck by Grace and her father.

" *At length the boat touched the wreck, and Somerville rushed to the bulwarks to aid his deliverers to mount upon the deck.* " Mutual recognition ensues (on the deck, the boat is floating untended in the ocean).

" ' *Miss Darling again my saviour,* ' cried Somerville, and without waiting to receive a reply, he rushed down into the cabin, exclaiming, ' *Mordaunt, we are saved. We are saved.* ' "

Grace Darling soon made her appearance in the cabin for she had heard there was a female below. Then " *the bark was shoved away from the wreck. Grace again determined upon taking the oar, and in spite of Somerville insisting on her relinquishing it to him, she carried her resolution into effect.* "

" ' *Give way,* ' cried the venerable father of the heroic girl, and the boat again rode triumphantly over the wild waves. "

The author gets on quickly to the story of the seducer, the heroes and the victims and we hear no more of Grace.

In 1850 the author started *Reynolds Newspaper* as the mouthpiece of advanced working-class opinion. Young Mr. Reynolds was certainly progressive, for his preface to his work on Grace Darling contains an analysis of the superior position of French women : " I do not believe the mind of woman is constitutionally weaker than that of man ; I

maintained that if it possessed the same opportunities of development it would be equally powerful," he wrote ; hailed Grace as a pioneer who had proved female heroism to equal that of man ; and dedicated his book to her.

But Mr. Reynold's novel was so obviously the product of a Londoner who knew nothing of the heroine, that its publication was harmless.

### THE LOCAL NOVEL.

*Grace Darling or The Maid of the Isles* was issued anonymously, and published by W. and T. Fordyce, Newcastle-on-Tyne. It appeared in thirty-six weekly numbers at sixpence each, or in six parts at two shillings each, and the first ten weekly numbers were sent to Grace, with the following letter, to which Grace's answer, from a draft preserved among her father's papers, is given.

From Jerrold Vernon  
to Grace Darling.

48 Dean Street, Newcastle,  
July 10th, 1839.

Madam,—I beg your acceptance of the enclosed part of a work now in the course of publication and the continuation of which I shall, at a future period, have the pleasure of forwarding to you.

One glance at the Title page will inform you of the nature of the work, so that for me to add anything respecting it may justly be deemed superfluous. On a perusal of its pages you will find there are various scenes and characters of an imaginary nature introduced, this I trust you will easily excuse as from the miscellaneous nature of your reading you will often have discovered the reins given to Fancy and that fiction is frequently mingled with the gravest truths for the purpose of adorning a moral and giving point to a tale.

Any information you may have to give respecting your interesting little island I shall be happy to receive and in concluding allow me to express the hope that you will find nothing within the pages of this work that can in the slightest degree prove unpleasant to your feelings, or offensive to the retiring delicacy of your nature.

I have the honour to subscribe myself with the greatest respect one of the many admirers of the heroic and noble conduct pursued by you on the late memorable and never to be forgotten occasion.

From Grace Darling  
to Jerrold Vernon.

JERROLD VERNON.

Kind Sir,

I received the ten numbers of *The Maid of the Isles*, which you sent, and beg to return my sincere acknowledgments of the same ; and being sensible of your good intentions I wish you every success in the world.

P.S. Although I have no wish for anything of the kind, permit me to say that a little book wrote after the manner of the *Kent Indianman*, or the *Rothsay Castle*, would have been preferred by your

Much obliged, humble servant,  
G. H. DARLING.

A puzzled reader of the book subsequently wrote to Grace :

Mr. B. R. Gooch to Grace Darling.

"To enquire of you whether the various characters and all their combined and most extraordinary circumstances mentioned in the book is mere novelty, or are those historical memorial facts relating to St. Clair, Fitzroy, Charles and Miss Dudley, Vlanraland, Wernher, Constance, Clementina and Camilla ? The little, though not uninteresting history of yourself I am well convinced is a true though a brief narrative<sup>1</sup> but the other part of this book seems very mysterious. Probably you will not deem it too much trouble to return me a few lines, or the truth or falsehood of these statements so as I may know how to prize my purchase."

From Grace Darling  
to Mr. B. R. Gooch.

Sir,

I received yours dated the 6th Decr. which I should have answered sooner but not having the book by me after making enquiries find that a book wrote by Mr. G. Vernon was printed by Mr. Fordice, Newcastle, including most of the names you mentioned ; although most of the things concerning the *Forfarshire* are facts, yet as I am quite unacquainted with the persons mentioned it certainly gives the appearance of Romance altogether and a Friend of mine<sup>2</sup> having seen some of the first numbers wrote the Gentleman objecting very much to such a tragical fact being mixed up in such manner, at the same time observing that a small volume written after the manner of the *Rothsay Castle* or *Kent East Indiaman* might (have) been both interesting and useful.

Yours most obt.,

G. H. DARLING.

It will be noted the ten parts do not appear to have been preserved by the Darlings. But thanks to Mr. Gooch's enquiry, we have Grace's positive repudiation of acquaintance with any of the characters. Before this letter came to light an exhaustive local enquiry could trace none of the local characters introduced as Grace's friends.

The novelist at once showed he knew nothing about the Darlings, the Longstone, or the Farnes. He stated the Longstone Lighthouse was at the north-east corner of the *largest* island ; that the ancestors of William Darling had been for several successive ages the only inhabitants of Longstone Island, hence it had almost become "their hereditary office to tend the beacon lights ; this duty was formerly much more arduous than at present, coal fires being kept perpetually burning . . ." and that the Longstone Lighthouse was first used in 1822 (instead of 1826). He had never heard of the ten years spent by Grace on the Brownsman. But he described a visit to the Longstone by mysterious strangers on a yacht, the day after Grace's birth, when the infant was shewn to the noble strangers on the Longstone and a long imaginary conversation ensued between Mr. Darling and his imaginary visitors ;

<sup>1</sup> It was *not*.

<sup>2</sup> Her father.

this incident passed into other narratives as truth, and led to the legend Grace was born on the Longstone.

Grace's home life was described with few facts but much sentiment ; Mr. Darling became her preceptor so that he could not be parted from her, and as his pupil approached maidenhood Jerrold Vernon deftly started what may be termed the hopeful beginnings of a romance, *when Grace sees a yacht in difficulties and incites her parent and brothers to the rescue of Caroline Dudley, daughter of the Earl of Dudley but also of Spanish ancestry, a young lady of Grace's age, who is accompanied by her brother and his friend.*<sup>1</sup>

For two chapters sentiment rioted on the lonely Longstone. Grace and Caroline confided to one another ; the young gentlemen added to the sentimental possibilities. Grace was to be taken to the World of Wealth and Fashion, but the young people's relatives, visiting Tyne-mouth, were summoned South. Grace must be left on the Longstone, but her friendship with Caroline would endure.

A marvellous series of adventures on the part of the Dudleys followed, mostly in Spain, wherein Counts, Marquises, Abbesses, Countesses, and innumerable romantic maidens of high birth were entrapped, abducted, rescued, wedded, deserted, through perils by land, sea, war and monasteries. With this sensational romance was entwined the story of Grace on the Longstone, with the rescue of the *Autumn* and James Logan forming a basis for a long romance of Logan's life history mixed up with the adventures of the Dudleys. Two more romantic young gentlemen then arrived, George and Henry Herbert with their sisters Ellen and Mary, former friends of Grace, who proceeded to conduct her friends on a series of sightseeing expeditions. At Lindisfarne, Grace, wandering among the ruins with Henry Herbert, suddenly perceived a tall stranger, young, gloomy and mysterious, meditating beneath an ivy-covered arch.

"*St. Clair*, my college friend, whom I imagined at this moment wandering amid the ruins of Greece or Rome," exclaimed the young Northumbrian farmer, Henry Herbert, and grasped the stranger by the hand.

St. Clair the student paired off with Grace, and opportunity for displaying his culture was afforded on the tour to the beauty spots upon the coast. The party visited Warkworth, whose castle gave material for much historical information, Coquet and Dunstanburgh were equally stimulating to the student, and Grace recited the entire ballad of the Wandering Knight of Dunstanburgh in the ruins of that castle. Filled with excitement after such a day, Henry Herbert and his friend St. Clair could not bring themselves to turn in, but sought the top of the lighthouse to enjoy the moonlight. There St. Clair offered his Journal containing the events of the last two years, to Henry, so that his friend may be completely up to date.

In most of the larger northern cities subscriptions to a fund for Grace

<sup>1</sup> Grace wrote : " I am quite unacquainted with the persons mentioned," yet biographers have accepted them all as real people. Mrs. Hope, whose Biography is the accepted authority, even gives a date, September, 1832.

Darling were being solicited. The author skilfully introduced the more important of these places, therefore, in his romance, and St. Clair's Journal told of his friendship with a certain Fitzroy, in the town of Durham.

It seemed St. Clair had conducted Emily the lady of his affections to the altar, when everyone was surprised to see the blooming maiden turn pale and die in convulsive agony. "*She died*," said the author solemnly, "*a victim to the intensity of her feelings.*"

St. Clair was now making a pilgrimage to all the places he and his Emily had visited in brighter days, and was picking a sprig of ivy as a souvenir of the spot where once he had woven a garland for his betrothed's pure brow, when Grace and Henry had discovered him. One might reasonably expect something to come of Grace's encounter with the blighted bridegroom, but Grace merely returned to the mainland with the Herberts and indulged in an old-fashioned harvest festival, with the interest now transferred to one of the Herbert boys as suitor for her favour. Nothing again came of this. The author proceeded to immense complications between a mysterious Count Wernher (Countess Constance Lovina), the Marchioness of Santalina and Caroline Dudley. The next chapter contained ten pages of closely printed newspaper cuttings on the Wreck of the *Forfarshire* and ended with the arrival of William Brooks to the Longstone, in a boat from North Sunderland, presumably alone. "A hurried welcome only" could be accorded to him, because of the arrival of the shipwrecked survivors, to whom he proved "a gentle and affectionate nurse."

*"Leaving Grace Darling to the enjoyment of her well won fame, the reader is carried by a retrospective view to Count Wernher and Constance."*

These lovers visited Hull. A eulogy of this city was tactfully introduced. Count Wernher and his bride engaged the state cabin on a steam vessel proceeding to Scotland. "*Reader, that vessel was the ill-fated 'Forfarshire'.*" Count Wernher and his bride expired, engulfed in billows, by Grace's island home.

More newspaper reports followed, including accounts of Presentations to Grace and her grateful letters in reply (also from the newspapers), all strictly accurate, and then the writer once more "*returns to the Dudleys who were left at the conclusion of the thirteenth chapter, upon the point of accompanying the Marquis of Santalina to Spain. Other interesting particulars respecting Grace Darling must therefore be deferred for the present.*"

These turn out to be the visit of Grace to Alnwick Castle, where a completely erroneous account was given of the reception by the Duchess, the Duke being missed out entirely. Then a certain Tom Donaldson, a humble lover, appeared, who brought Grace a packet from her admirers in Newcastle. This excited immense emotion. "*Tears of pleasure so exquisite as are rarely seen by mortals, dimmed her eyes*," wrote the author, and incorporated seven closely printed pages containing the names of all the subscribers to the Newcastle Fund.

After this, the author returned full speed to the romances in Spain. At the same time he remembered his public waiting for news of Grace, and reassured them with :

"(At the conclusion of the following chapter the result of the enquiry instituted by order of the House of Commons relative to the Wreck of the 'Forfarshire' with other particulars of interest, will claim the attention of the readers of *Grace Darling*.)"

Caroline was meanwhile engaged in a romance which included a convent and a novice in Italy.

But the author soon sprang forward to the full coroner's report and findings of the Wreck, together with a verbatim Parliamentary Report of some twenty-four pages. Events in *Grace Darling's* career were, however, becoming rather dry, and the author suddenly introduced a boarder at the lighthouse with designs on the Fund raised for Grace by her admirers. After much wooing, his marriage proposals were declined, and he proceeded with a plan of abduction, foiled by another admirer, honest Tom.

The shuttlecock of the Dudleys and the Santalinas, and various other titled heroines and heroes who have been rapidly passing in and out, was now moving rather heavily. The Dudleys, therefore, returned to England to hear stories of *Grace Darling*, and finally all concerned in the romance were summoned to meet ecstatically at the Longstone Lighthouse, where Grace was left, firmly refusing to be drawn into the world of wealth and fashion.

This was the first novel Grace had ever seen. Possibly this was why her reply to the author who sent her his work, was so mild. She may have thought novels in general were a like mixture of fact and fancy.

But with the exception of a very brief memoir issued by the *Warder* in 1843, shortly after Grace's death, no source of information existed other than that of the novel and the current newspapers. When Eva Hope wrote her *Biography of Grace Darling* in 1875, she consulted a volume on Lighthouses and Lightships by W. H. Davenport Adams, which gave her a chapter on all types of lighthouses from Egypt to Cornwall, but did not include the Longstone; she consulted another book published by Cassell, *Notable Shipwrecks*, which gave her a chapter on such events as the *Birkenhead* and *Royal George* wrecks, etc.; she embarked on a lengthy history of Northumbria, especially Holy Island, including the life of the Venerable Bede as his boyhood had been spent at Monkwearmouth; but gave nothing about the Farnes beyond a quotation from Howitt in which he confused his recollection of the Brownsman with the Longstone, and a short paragraph from Raine.

She could not have known the district.

An illustration in the first edition shows the Longstone Lighthouse on top of a mountain, and though in 1875 she could have obtained innumerable details from residents in Bamburgh who remembered Grace, including her sister Thomasin still at the Wyndings, Mrs. Hope contented herself with the novel as her guide although her book is dedicated to Thomasin.

A puzzling coincidence is the identical dedication of Mrs. Hope's

book, in a biography under the name of Thomas Arthur, bearing the same title, the *Heroine of the Farne Islands*, and published by the Religious Tract Society, incorporating most if not all of the mistakes.

Eva Hope's *Biography* was, however, regarded as the outstanding authority, and biographies and novels alike distressed Grace's surviving relatives. In the autumn of 1878, three years after Mrs. Hope's book had appeared, Mr. Daniel Atkinson, a scholar and writer from Harrogate, first visited the Wyndings where Thomasin, the eldest sister, lived. Thomasin informed him of the "pack of lies" that had got into print, and supplied Mr. Atkinson with letters and notes to prove the truth, and in 1880 a little book was published, *The True Story of Grace Darling*, dedicated to the *Fourth* Duchess of Northumberland.

A new edition of Eva Hope's biography appeared, however, in 1886.

The *True Story* was scarcely more than a pamphlet. Daniel Atkinson and Thomasin Darling had little opportunity of bringing it before public notice. It was sold locally and locally they tried to push the sales. In a letter to Mr. Atkinson from Thomasin Darling, Wynding House, about 1880, we read: "Our book I believe is selling pretty well, had two parties called yesterday, told them where they would get it. I have no doubt of them as they intend calling again for me to write my name in them."

Further than Bamburgh, it scarcely seems to have travelled.

A short biography published by Blackie as late as 1929 starts off with the information that Grace was born on the Longstone, and states that Mr. Darling had "very frequently to render assistance to vessels in distress" and that "of course, in all cases where possible, Grace took her share in aiding her father in his dangerous but noble duty." Mr. Darling expressly denied this and so did Grace. To the fertile pen of Mr. Jerrold Vernon, may be attributed the trite and sentimental recollections evoked by Grace Darling's name.

## CHAPTER THIRTY-THREE

### GRACE AT HOME

A COLLECTION of letters from Grace and her family in the last two years of her life, shew how tenaciously she clung to her old ways in all their limitations. The summons to a larger experience found her implacably resistant. She would not change. That determined chin of hers was prophetic: she fought Destiny.

For Grace, sufficient growth was coming in the family experience. Mary Ann, a widow, had returned to the lighthouse with her only surviving child, Georgiann, Grace's godchild. William Brooks had brought his young wife, Jane, and presently the eldest brother, William, sent his first-born, Grace's nephew, the only one she ever saw, named after William Swan.

Her widowed sister, her married brother, a niece and a nephew—those were Grace's interests. She tried to push aside the incessant



*Grace Horsley Darling autograph*

GRACE HORSLEY DARLING

By Henry Perlee Parker.

*National Portrait Gallery*





claims of lawyers and Trustees ; of would-be suitors and inquisitive admirers. They had nothing to do with her duty to her parents and her family.

The bitter experiences of Edinburgh and Newcastle, and of the novel, had greatly dimmed Grace's natural and spontaneous kindliness to strangers ; she was no longer the girl who had dimpled, blushed and smiled with delight at Mr. Smeddle's offer of a silk dress as reward ; who had innocently offered a parcel of dried fish to the reporters when they came out to the wreck ; who had laughed, and sympathized with, and made rabbit pie for the artists ; who had cut off her pretty hair and written her autograph for everyone.

Three years of constant visitations by tourists in small boats and in steamer-loads ; of unending presents, more books than she could read, more silver than she could handle, more jewelry than she could wear ; of letters that never ceased, their replies demanding incessant labour—all this had turned Grace into a recluse who shrank from everyone except those belonging to her natural sphere. Where in her simplicity, she had welcomed, albeit shyly, all their visitors with instinctive kindness and sympathy, now in her sophistication, she shrank from them as cruel persecutors. The pleasant freedom of intercourse with the young naturalists had gone : they saw her as the much sought-after heroine and tactfully refrained from adding to the stream of curiosity-mongers. One thing alone remained unchanged and this she clung to : her family's need of her.

Her father and mother, the lighthouse duties, her brothers on the main, Thomasin in Bamburgh, her beloved confidante ! Within her self-prescribed limits, Grace could lavish all her generous love on those belonging to her own small circle. The first letter refers to her Aunt Marsden's illness. One reference is made to an admirer, and the post-script guards this confidence. Her needle continued busy with gifts : the note to Mrs. Smeddle alludes to the frock for " my little friend," her namesake.

From Grace Darling  
to Thomasin Darling, Bamburgh.

Longstone, 1840.  
February 4th.

Dear Sister,—In hopes this will find you in good health as we are all at present, thank God. We have been thinking very long to hear from Balmbro but I am not flattering myself of betterness but at the same time we ought not to Dispair as God is all suffshent.<sup>1</sup>

We have been very Dull here this winter as the weather has been so bad that the fishing Boats have never got out and the last time Thomas Walker was here he never got time to come in and say how are you all ? as the weather had such a bad look. . . .

I think I forgot to let you know that I had got a present from Mr. Allen. Butiful silver Sugar Tongs ; the inscription is *W. M. Allen South Shields to Grace Horsley Darling, 1839*. If you recollect

<sup>1</sup> This refers to her Aunt Marsden's illness.

he came to see me at Aunt Marsden's. When Father seed him at Ropes, he came down with him.

Dear Sister, I hope you will have got little Smeddle's frock and bagg. Do please to put the noat in along with them and seal them and direct them to Mrs. Smeddle, and you can give them to T. Carr when he comes for the letters, but you will put six pennyworth of lozenges or some other sweettes into the bagg ; and the 2 Shillings is for you. Be shoured (sure) and Do it as it will be some time before I will be on shore.

Please to send two or three lines and let us know how George is and how you are coming on this Cold and Stormy winter. I could not send the money and the noat open so I will make a parcel which I hope you will receive safe.

You must put this letter in the fire as soon as you have looked it over. We all join in kind love to you all.

I remain your

Loving sister,

G. H. DARLING.

In the next letter, Georgiann is making her exacting presence felt.

"Mary Ann says she cannot get time to write but Georgiann will not let her have time . . . when you see Mr. Fender you will give Mary Ann's compliments to him and say she would be obliged to him for some Magnesia for the Baby. You will send it to North Sunderland with the other things. Put a piece of my gown in for them to see it."

Thomasin made Grace's dresses ; the exquisite sewing can be seen in several of her gingham frocks preserved at the Wyndings. Elizabeth Grace was married to Mr. Maule and living at North Sunderland. Grace's worries peep out here.

From Grace Darling  
to Thomasin.

February 28th, 1840.

Dear Sister,

Will you be so kind as to ask Mr. Smeddle for a proper address to the gold brooch letter as I have had ready this some time and was at a loss how to address it properly. I forgot to ask him that day I received it and have not seen him since and Father forgot that day we were on shore to inquire, but I hope you will get it as soon as possible and write me a letter, as I am quite ashamed that a letter of thanks has not been forwarded before this time.

From Grace Darling  
to Thomasin.

May 28th, 1841.

Dear Sister,

I hope this will find you in good health as it leaves us all at present, thank God.

I received your welcome letter sent by Henry on the Tuesday as father and Brooks was over seeing the garden. I have not had an opportunity of sending my frock sooner as we have had such stormy weather ; perhaps you may have had it better behind the Castle walls.

You said we need not be surprised if you come over and Breakfast with us some morning, but Father said you had better bring it with you as you have invited yourself.

I have sent your caps that were made up for me when at Sunderland. You will be surprised when you see I have sent them unwashed but we are so badly off for water, we have five weeks' clothes dirty and not a drop of water to wash them with, and only about two Ankens in the well for dog or cat. I wish you could wish us to a good wet day!

Visited by Mr. Walker one of the head engineers from London on the 27th May. He came from Warkworth in a little steam boat to the Fern House and stopped there all that night and came over here the next morning about half past 4 o'clock. We seed the steam boat the night before, but thought it might be a pleasure party from Newcastle.

But it was better for he came to see about Brooks' house building. This Walker was the man put on that was sent down when the buildings was started at Fern House. They are going to make us more convenient aft and perhaps wall us all in but cannot say much about it until the plans come down from London. The inspector that was at Coquet was with him; his name is Howie. He was the same as Coal was at Fern House. We are looking for our own turn every day.

Mary Ann is going to send her frock when father comes to Balmro. Georgiann is a fine little girl. I think you would not know her now if you saw her; they say she is a clever baby but she cannot walk yet. You must get her frocks sent home as soon as you can for she is very clever at dirtying them. She is a pet for Grandfather.

I return you thanks for the veals. I am going to send you some pastry that I promised you the next time. We have been throng making some shirts for George.

Father and Brooks is just going to Sunderland for provisions; the weather prevented them or they would have been there sooner. We expect Thomas Walker with water to-day.

*Monday morning half past six o'clock.*

There is none up but myself yet but Georgiann is raising her chat and will call on them all soon.

Please write soon and let us know how you are going on. We all join in kind love to you.

I remain your loving sister,

G. H. DARLING.

In the next letter we are reminded of Joseph Livesey and the Seven Men of Preston, for it was just about this time that they signed the first pledge to refrain from intoxicating liquor. Grace drinking her porter with little Georgiann and baby William, or drinking Captain Watson's health in whisky, presents an extraordinary picture. But working men were accustomed to 16 or 17 pints of liquor daily, and children in infant schools were given beer and wine.

The reference to Mr. Hewitson tells of his last illness. Another little frock goes off to Captain Watson's child. Many friends and strangers

named their babies after Grace, and, loving children as she did, she took a special interest in them all.

From Grace Darling  
to Thomasin Darling, Bamburgh.

Dear Sister,

January 8th, 1842.

In hopes this will find you in good health as it leaves us all at present thank God. I have taken the opportunity of sending your things as Swann is out here to-day.

We got Brother George's Box yesterday. Mrs. Hall has sent us all a little pot with our names upon them for Drinking our porter out of or something else ; except Brooks and Jane. Little William got one. Thomas Hall sent Father a very nice ruler of Brass, and Mother a Brass Snuff Box. George had been to Cullercoats at Mr. Hewitson's but I am very sorry to say that he (Mr. Hewitson) is very ill ; he had an attack of the — ; he did not know George ; The Revd. Hopper his nephew was with him, he was down here last time with Mr. Hewitson, we were all very sorry to hear it. I know you will be the same.

Captain Watson passed the Longstone yesterday for London, he was off here all day as he was becalmed ; he kept his Colours flying until half past three. Unfortunately Father and Brooks had gone over to Brownsman before they knew that it was his ship. As soon as they came home, they went off to him. He (Father) was very sorry that he did not see him sooner as he (Captain Watson) had given up hopes of seeing them at all and had been below at Dinner until they were almost alongside. He was very kind ; they had each a glass of porter with him in his cabin. There was lady passengers lieing all sides of them in beds. There were also other passengers too but they only had about ten minutes with him. I sent my little namesake the little frock that I had made. Father took a couple of Rabbits to him. He sent us two bottles of whisky to drink his health in, and six Biscuits. I have sent you one of them as it came from Captain Watson. Mrs. Watson and Family was all well. Please write soon. Swann is here.

I remain your loving sister,

G. H. DARLING.

The next letter meanders along in a pleasant ripple of family gossip and small commissions to the sister on the Main.

"You will please to let Aunt Mary know that Brooks will take the halph of the Pig. He says he wants half of the head and two feet a fair halph."

The children come in again.

"Little Billie is a good deal better. When we ask Georgiann where Aunt Thomasin is she says 'Pilot !' (you went with them).

"Captain Watson is passing here to-day for London. I have just Father's word for it, I have not looked out. He was a good way off but Father knows his vessel."

One sees the ships on the highway of the seas, their quiet passing through the leisurely hours, the small excitements when they salute the light.

"Sunday afternoon, they have all been reposing but Mary Ann and me but I must leave off as they are all up now."

The letter breathes out tranquillity and homely cheerfulness. The week-day traffic has paused and Grace takes advantage of the last hours of the short Northern daylight, with a hint of spring maybe in the February sunshine; there would be a good fire in the generous kitchen grate, and the grandfather clock ticking peacefully and Grace in her Sunday best with the gold brooch perhaps and certainly her watch adorning the plain stuff gown of Thomasin's making. Nobody had thought to give her a desk with a fine stock of writing paper for all these letters she had to write, so she would take the paper from the chest of drawers beneath the window, where all the household goods were stored.

The next letter refers to the approaching visit Grace planned to Coquet Island, to see her brother William. William Darling's oldest son was the second of Grace's brothers to become a light-keeper. The apprenticeship as mason, joiner, or carpenter had been excellent training for their father's profession. From childhood to youth the boys had been brought up to every practical duty of their future calling—life on the Main had developed responsibility and character—and one by one the Darling boys were to follow Wm. Brooks' example.

The Duke's interest in the Darling family, together with his lively sense of his responsibilities in regard to the proper ward of the coast, seems to have quickened action about the Coquet Lighthouse. The island belonged to him, and on November 9th, 1839, a paragraph appeared:

"*Lighthouse on Coquet Island.* The lighthouse, so long contemplated on Coquet Island, is immediately to be erected; the Elder Brethren of the Trinity House are in communication with Duke of Northumberland on the subject. His Grace, it is said, declines receiving any remuneration beyond a mere acknowledgment for the occupation of his property, on the ground that the project bids fair to be of advantage to the shipping interest, by lessening the danger on that part of the coast, as vessels will be enabled to hold one light in view until they get sight of another from Tynemouth to Fern Islands."<sup>1</sup>

The Duke's letter recommending Grace's eldest brother as light-keeper follows.

From the Duke of Nd.

to Capt. Pelly, Dep. Master to the Corporation  
of the Trinity House.

Alnwick Castle,  
November 14th, 1839.

Sir,

I beg to recommend to the Consideration of the Trinity Board

<sup>1</sup> *Tyne Mercury*, November 1839.

William Darling as well qualified to take charge of the Light House which is to be erected on Coquet Island.

He is Thirty Years of Age and resides with his Wife at Alnwick as a Joiner and bears the character of an honest, sober, quiet and industrious Person.

He assisted his Father (who has now the charge of the Longstone Light House) until he was Sixteen Years old—was apprenticed to Mr. Bell (a Joiner in this Town) who will give him an excellent Character, and he has been mostly employed during the last two Years by my Clerk of the Works who speaks in the highest terms of him.

As William Darling is so well known I have the less hesitation in offering him to your notice, as I feel confident that his character will bear the strictest enquiries.

I am, etc.,

NORTHUMBERLAND.

The sisters were to visit William, and Grace wrote to Thomasin about the trip.

From Grace Darling  
to Miss Darling, Balmbro (by post). March 4th, 1842.

Dear Sister,

In hopes this will find you in good health as it leaves us all at present, thank God. I received my Cloak and the Slippers on the 1st March but I am sorry to say they are too short it is a pity for they seem to be a paire of very nice ones but I think will keep them until I come.

I was Dissipointed in not receiving a few lines from you with them as we are all Most happy to hear from you when you can find time. We are very throng Cleaning the House for summer and as soon as we get it done, please God, and all well, we will be going to pay our visit to the Coquet and weather permit. It is not determined which way we are to go yet. Father has been thinking of the Berwick steamer from Sunderland but I will write again before that time. We have had a letter from brother William, I am happy to say they are all well; and one from Jane at Newcastle. As George was working at Jarrow for a few days he did not come home at night but they are all well.

Georgina has got 15 teeth altogether. Billie has got none yet, his head is still sore with the striking out. Mother says I have to tell you that she intends to come and see you and sister Bessy before the work begins. If all well Mary Ann says she is coming to see everybody, she says that she is very grateful to you being so kind to Bessy Carr and them all on her account, but I must leave off. Please be so kind as to write a few lines and inclose mine.

I remain, Your loving Sister,

G. H. DARLING.

These letters prove that the shock and exposure of the night of the wreck was not responsible for Grace's illness. This is the fourth year since then, and during the whole time Grace's letters to her family

record her own good health. Details of any illness in the family are always given in her letters and progress (or otherwise) stated.

The verdict of her biographers that her decline was brought about by the exposure on the night of the wreck is absurd, considering that no symptoms of illness appeared until more than three years after that event. But the nervous strain to which Grace was subjected, was enough to bring any highly strung and sensitive young woman into ultimate collapse. In these letters there is one small indication of her overwrought condition.

From Grace Darling, undated,  
to Thomasin.

Saturday Night.

Dear Sister,

In hopes this will find you in good health as we are all at present thank God. I have sent you a dark bonnet trimming for winter which I hope you will like and a silk Handkerchief which I hope you will hem and give to George with my compliments. Brother Brooks came on shore to-day and they were all quite well but it got too late to go home and I think it will be Sunday before we get off now.

You will excuse me to G. (George) in not writing a few lines as I cannot find opportunity as Betsy came in and looked on when I was busy writing which I can assure you put me very much about and asked me what G. it was, and had to tell her not to mention it but I do not need to tell you that.

Your loving sister,

G. H. DARLING.

The picture of Grace's irritation at being watched, and her aversion to any sort of interference or inquisitiveness is plain in the last lines.

William Howitt also indicates his impression of this in a visit to the Longstone in the summer of 1841, the last she spent there.

*From William Howitt's "Visits to Remarkable Places."*

"But where is Grace Darling all this time, and what is she like? Grace Darling is as perfect a realization of Jeannie Deans in an English form as it is possible for a woman to be. She is not like any of the portraits of her. She is a little simple, modest young woman, I should say five or six and twenty. She is neither tall nor handsome; but she has the most gentle, quiet, amiable look, and the sweetest smile that I ever saw in a person of her station and appearance . . . the foolish, though natural avidity of the mob of wonder-lovers, who in steam boat loads have flocked thither, filling that tall lighthouse several stories high, till nobody could stir; the attentions of the great—for the titled have not failed to pay her the homage of their flatteries—none of these things have made her anything but what she was before. The Duke and Duchess of Northumberland had her and her father over to the castle, and presented her with a gold watch, which she always wears when visitors come. The Humane Society sent her a most flattering vote of thanks, which is in the house, framed. . . . She shuns public notice, and is even troubled at the visits of the curious. . . .



"The house is literally crammed with presents of one kind or another, including a considerable number of books. . . . When I went she was not visible, and I was afraid I should not have got to see her, as her father said she very much disliked meeting strangers that she thought came to stare at her ; but when the old man and I had had a little conversation he went up to her room, and soon came down with a smile, saying she would be with us soon. So, when we had been up to the top lighthouse, and had seen its machinery ; had taken a good look out at the distant shore—and Darling had pointed out the spot of the wreck, and the way they took to bring the people off, we went down, and found Grace sitting at her sewing, very neatly, but very simply dressed, in a plain sort of a striped printed gown, with her watch-seal just seen at her side, and her hair neatly braided. Just, in fact, as such girls are dressed, only not quite so smart as they often are. She rose very modestly ; and with a pleasant smile said, ' How do you do, sir ? ' Her figure is by no means striking ; quite the contrary ; but her face is full of sense, modesty, and genuine goodness ; and that is just the character she bears. Her prudence delights one. We are charmed that she should so well have supported the brilliancy of her humane deed. It is confirmative of the notion that such actions must spring from genuine heart and mind. As I have said, she has had various offers of marriage, but none that were considered quite the thing ; and she said No, to all. One was from an artist, who came to take her portrait. The Duke of Northumberland told her that he hoped she would be careful in such affairs, as there would be sure to be designs upon her money."

## CHAPTER THIRTY-FOUR

### GRACE DARLING COMES ASHORE

GRACE and Thomasin went to Coquet Island and much enjoyed the visit. The sisters took long walks by the banks of the Coquet river on the Main and apparently Grace returned to Alnwick, on the way home, in the best of health, and broke the journey at the Macfarlanes' home in Narrowgate.

As will be seen they arrived full of energy, glad to see their friends, and transact necessary business. Grace's letter is redolent of high spirits. It records however the fact that they have had a thorough wetting, but to Grace, wind and rain were familiar companions. But Grace had had a long and difficult journey from the Coquet and probably overdid the visits and greetings. At any rate, it was on this occasion she caught a chill. Nothing very serious at first ; merely the consequence of the wetting and the bustle and crowded hours which her letter describes.

From Grace Darling  
to Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Darling.  
Dear Brother and Sister,

March 25th, 1842.

I take the opportunity of writing these few lines, we arrived at

Alnwick quite safe. We got to Cousin Mackfarlane's and had tea. We called at Bondgate Hall but Margaret was in town, but was in, in a few minutes. She was quite well. We got the rain before we got here. Our box was here and we got ourselves changed and made very comfortable. I hope you would get safe home although I've no doubt you would. Our friends are all well and send their kind love to you all. Thomasin is pretty well I think after her tramp. The Duke and Duchess left Alnwick about a week since.

We have been to Mr. Sharp they were very kind and gave each of us a glass of wine, but we have to be there to-morrow and at Smith's but they were out at tea and have got nothing done. It is very wet and windy to-night. You must excuse my short letter as we will have to take it to the post. We will write when we arrive at Balmbro.

I remain Your loving sister,

GRACE H. DARLING.

P.S.

Alnwick, Friday night.

Please write soon and let us know how you got home. Write to me here before I leave for Balmbro.

Grace then went back to the Longstone and Thomasin returned to Bamburgh.

The Longstone that spring and summer was to be a very busy place. Mr. Darling had written to Trinity, explaining the crowded conditions owing to Brooks' marriage, and had added, "After fifteen years' experience permit me to say that in my opinion a good house might be built where the boat wall is at present. In his *Journal* he records :

"May 28th, 1841. Messrs. Walker and Burgess to plan W. B. Darling's house."

But a year was to pass before the building began.

When Grace returned home she seems to have been, if not in her usual health, at least moderately well, and certainly about her usual duties.

This is the last letter before the building of Brooks' house started.

From Grace Darling  
to Thomasin Darling.

(P.S.) Aprile the 17th. The second attempt.

Dear Sister,

Aprile 13th, 1842.

I take the opportunity of writing these few lines hoping to find you in good health. Mother is a great deal better and I hope in a few Days will be quite well and blessed be God for it.

But I am sorry to say little William has been a great deal worse since you was here ; but these two or three Days he has been a good deal better. We thought it might be the medecine that had that effect on him. But they intend to come to the Doctor with him the first opportunity. Jane says I have to tell you if you will be so kind as get his Coat done as soon as you can for him to come ashore with, as they would like to have it.

We have had no more word about the work starting here yet.

Father, Brooks and me was over at Brownsman garden on Saturday and we were very busy until the sun was setting. Mary had the light to attend to, and I dare say we have always been in a throng ever since I came home. I think we have been something like as you, and with very little to show for it.

You will think me very unkind in not writing sooner but I think we have been waiting on one another this time. . . . I have no news but the best and we are all well and I hope this will find you the same. You will excuse my short letter. I remain your aff. Sister,

No news but the best !

G. H. DARLING.

The April sunshine heralding the spring. We can see Grace with the setting sun streaming on to the quiet Brownsman garden and the seas becoming golden and gleaming with that strange suffused inner radiance of the long summer twilight. It would be shadowy amongst the hilly surface of the rock, with the rough tussocks on the ridges and the rabbits taking the evening sun and basking in the deepening rays before they started their ghostly scuttering and gambols. Grace's dog would be having a good race before they got the boat out and rowed back past the frowning rocks beset with birds. One can hear the long sweep of the oars and the shrill cries of the gulls as the little party make their way back to the massive tower where centres all the happiness Grace knows.

Then the light streams out red and white by turns, a living, pulsing sign of the human life within the lighthouse, the home amongst the loneliness and bleakness of the Farnes, the splendour and the fury of the sea.

These were the last quiet hours upon the Longstone. On May 4th, 1842, old Darling records :

"A. Gordon brought lime to begin building W.B.D.'s house."

Soon after, this appeared :<sup>1</sup>

"*The Farne Islands.*

"Not long ago the gentlemen of the London Trinity House resolved to erect upon the Longstone Rock, close to Mr. Darling's Lighthouse, two cottages, one we understand, for Mr. W. Brooks Darling (Grace's brother) and the other as a reserve for the accommodation of the sufferers from shipwreck, which the dangerous navigation of those islands renders of such frequent occurrence. About twenty men are already employed on the rock, working the stones for the buildings, which it is said will cost the Trinity House above £2,000. Mr. Wm. Thompson and Mr. Andrew Gordon, of North Sunderland are contractors for the work, under the superintendence of Mr. Duncan, the agent for the Trinity House."

Imagine the congestion on the Longstone rock !

Visitors were beginning their customary pleasure excursions. Mr. Duncan, the agent from Trinity, was constantly over. Grace would

<sup>1</sup> *Berwick and Kelso Warter*, June 4th, 1842.

not get a minute to herself. The cold she caught at Alnwick, developed With all the workmen going back and forth to North Sunderland, it was impossible to keep a report of her illness getting to Thomasin's ears.

Grace tells Thomasin she is better ; she has been to the Main with her father ; her letter is particularly vivid and gossipy. The workmen have gone back to their homes, her mother is sitting knitting, Grace writes beside her in the twilight.

From Grace Darling  
to Thomasin Darling.

Longstone Light,  
June 20th, 1842.

My dear Sister,

I received your letter on the 29th inst., and was sorry to hear that you got word that I had been so poorly as I know how unhappy you would be, I have never been quite free from cold since I was on shore but this last three weeks I had been worse. I think it has been influenza but blessed be God I am a good deal better. . . .

Perhaps you would have heard that our Trinity Gentlemen has been down, they were here on the 17th. There was four gentlemen and Captain Sir John Pelley, Deputy Master, five of them altogether. It is some five years since we had them down. We saw the steamer between six and seven in the morning this side of the Coquet. They went to the Inner Light first, we was all ready for them. Mr. Duncan and Robert and one or two more went over to Smith's to meet them.

It was to see that everything was satisfactory in the work way. They have brought down Smith's and our kitchen fireplaces, the same as the Coquet ones. The light-keepers have all got their new suits, all Blue. The trousers are braided down the sides, they are long-tailed coats ; the Buttons I will send you an impression of. The Gentlemen was very kind. Captain Wellbank told us that they were going to the Coquet if we had anything to send to them, which was very kind. Mother will be quite at liberty now . . . but you must not look for her until she comes.

I was at Sunderland that day Father was at Bamburgh, I would have comed over with him but I thought it was very likely you would be out and I do not like to come to Bamburgh when you are out working ; and more now since the death of Aunt Marsden.

You said you did not know whether you would get out to see us this summer or not. But it will not be Mrs. Eben that will stop you. I am very happy to hear that she is thriving and well. I think Father was saying he saw that Mr. Eben had been fishing a few nights since.

Captain Watson passed here for London on the first of the month and hoisted his colours which we answered but next time he hoists his we will give the real flag as our Trinity Masters have brought five down for the Longstone. There is going to be a flagstaff here and likewise at the Inner Light.

Father and Mother and all are well but Billy he is much the same, no better, but I must leave off as it is getting dark. Mother is knitting stockings for Father. I cannot give any account of the rest of us.

Georgie Ann has got a very pretty pink frock sent her from Sunderland. Mary Ann says she thinks she knows the woman who used to go about with the Basket with tapes and thread etc. She came and throwed it into the boat to Robert and said it was for Georgie Ann, that is all we know about it. We all join in kind love to you, I hope to see you soon. I am your loving sister,

GRACE H. DARLING.

Give my best respects to Mr. and Mrs. Ebens when you see them.

But she did not keep better. She grew worse.

Grace was still responsible for the orderly appearance of the apartments. To one of her many correspondents Grace had written :

“ You mentioned me keeping account of matters connected with the *Forfarshire*, which I have no doubt would be interesting a few years hence, but I never thought of doing it, and I do not think I could find time for such a thing at present.”

Public luminaries to-day have secretaries and servants ; Grace had none. Added to the confusion of the building, was the summer with its immense and ceaseless stream of sightseers. Is it to be wondered at that her health broke down ?

But where was she to go ? On the Main she would be even more accessible to curious strangers. Bamburgh and North Sunderland were crowded with summer visitors. In the cottages of her relatives privacy was impossible. It must be remembered the Darlings were still in the limited circumstances of their position. All the moneys collected or granted to both had been paid into the Fund. It never occurred to anyone that a small part of the money collected for Grace would be well employed in taking her right out of the conditions which were plainly more than she could stand. If one asks why the Duke and Duchess did not intervene, Grace Darling's chief virtue in their eyes was her humble acceptance of the duties she had been called to, as a light-keeper's daughter. Her prudence in not desiring any of the money beyond ten pounds a year, seemed just what a girl in her position should manifest : her charm consisted in her contentment with her lowly lot.

A visit to the South, even perhaps to foreign climes, in sheltered circumstances, would be regarded as emergence from her station. So Grace remained at the Longstone amongst all the mess and stir of building, and the troops of summer excursionists who heard the cough, saw her pallor, and spread sensational tales about her illness.

Reports were spreading on the Main. Grace was not getting better ; symptoms of decline were showing. Her family and friends were becoming anxious. The fine weather had come but the cough grew worse, and the boatloads of excursionists returned to Newcastle and Blyth and Shields with the news of what they had seen and heard.

There she was, shut up on that small rock, with the noise of the building all day, with the lighthouse crowded out with the family, the small children, Georgiann “ raising her chat,” and little Brooks, fretful

and ailing ; with Mr. Duncan there, and Mr. Walker coming and going, and the usual traffic between the rock and North Sunderland ; and Grace, coughing, coughing, that fatal graveyard cough, with nowhere to turn to for a moment's quiet or privacy. Grace, sensitive, shy, retiring, but still on exhibit as the National Heroine, now more interesting than ever with her pale cheeks and shadowed eyes.

The sea air is bad for her, said the wisecracks, and finally Grace went to Bamburgh to stay with Thomasin and be near the doctor, Mr. Fender. But now Grace had to be taken care of. Thomasin gave up her dress-making to be her sister's nurse.

Grace was not yet a recognized invalid, only weak and poorly, with this tiresome cough. She saw her friends at Bamburgh, and talked with her great friend, Janet Carr—later Mrs. Ross—about the fuss that people made of her and how she could not understand the public attitude when she had only done a simple act of duty.

But the Darling family had a friend at Wooler, George Shield, an artist, interested in the Farnes because of his bird pictures. Like many people in that time, he too feared the sea air was injurious and wrote as follows :

From Geo. Shield  
to Grace Darling.

My dear Miss Darling,

Wooler,  
August 16th, 1842.

Since we wrote you in reply we have been very anxious about you and as we have heard nothing of you since, we are afraid that you are worse in health and therefore have not been able to come, if this is not the case which I hope it is not I would press upon you to embrace the opportunity of such favourable weather to come and stay with us here. Everything which we can do for you shall be done and your comfort will be the study of us all ; therefore do take my advice and leave the neighbourhood of the sea instantly and try what good you can derive from the pure air of our hills.

Be so kind as to let us either see you or hear from you by return—but we would much rather have the pleasure of seeing you and your sister. My two eldest Daughters and their Mother are beginning to fret very much about your staying away while the weather is so very fine.

I am yours very truly,

GEO. SHIELD.

Grace went to Wooler almost at once.

The air of the hills was a hopeful prospect. Mountain air, sea air, country air, bracing air, mild air, each in its own way a possible restorative, thought the people of those days. Grace was the better for the change. She was not yet laid up. A charming letter to her parents is full of happiness and simple enjoyment of her visit. She speaks of the fatigue of the rest of the party on an excursion they took together, but not of her own, and she is full of the local excitements ; the Queen who is passing through the Fairway and expected at Alnwick !

Grace lived to see steam triumphant, and the Dundee and Perth Shipping Co.'s steamer *Perth* pilot vessel to the Royal Yacht, though

Her Majesty did not give this name in her Journal ; it may have been the " packet " she refers to.

" I annex a list of our squadron," wrote the Queen.<sup>1</sup>

- " 1. The ship *Pique*, 36 guns.
2. The sloop *Daphne*, 18 guns (both of which join us at the Nore).
3. The steam-vessel *Salamander* (with the carriages on board).
4. The steam-vessel *Radamanthus* (Lord Liverpool and Lord Morton on board).
5. The steam-vessel *Monkey*, tender, which has towed us till nine o'clock (Mr. Anson and the equerries on board).
6. The steam-vessel *Shearwater*, which is now towing us (Sir James Clark on board).
7. The steam-vessel *Black Eagle* (which has the ladies on board, and which tows us in front of the *Shearwater*).
8. The steam-vessel *Lightning* (with the Jager Benda, and our two dogs, " Eos " and " Cairnach," on board) in front, which has gone to take our barge on board from the *Pique*.
9. The steam-vessel *Fearless* (for survey).

This composes our squadron, besides which the Trinity House steamer goes with us, and, also a packet. Innumerable little pleasure steamboats have been following us covered with people."

Full steam ahead, indeed !

If there had been any lingering doubt in the public mind, this demonstration settled it. Henceforth those who had any prejudice against steam were scorned as Mr. Dickens scorned them in one of the earliest numbers of his next year's novel, *Martin Chuzzlewit*.

*" These gentry were much opposed to steam and all new-fangled ways, and held ballooning to be sinful, and deplored the degeneracy of the times ; which that particular member of each little club who kept the keys of the nearest church professionally, always attributed to the prevalence of dissent and irreligion."*

While Grace was writing of the Queen, that Royal Lady was entering in her Journal :

" Wednesday, August 31st.—We passed Coquet Island and Bamburgh Castle on the Northumberland coast, which I was unfortunately unable to see ; but from my cabin I saw Farne Island, with Grace Darling's lighthouse on it. . . . It was a beautiful evening, calm, with a fine sunset and the air so pure."

Grace, meanwhile, wrote :

My dear Father and Mother,

We received your welcome letter, and happy to hear you was all well. We was very much pleased to hear that you had been at the Coquet, as we know that you would be quite delighted. It was a pity

<sup>1</sup> *Highland Journal*.

you had not the pleasure of seeing the Hermitage after all the trouble you had had. I think it was a pity that little William had gone with you, as he would be very troublesome for you all. Warkworth would just be in a complete confusion. [The Darlings went over for the Fair.] We was sorry to think you had such unfavourable tide and wind, as it would be such a long way to pull.

We lost the grand sight of the Queen passing; we would have liked very much to have seen it. I had a letter from Uncle Marsden. He said the Fern Islands was highly decorated, and had a fine appearance; but it is fully expected that Her Majesty will pay a visit to Chillingham Castle and Alnwick Castle. The Duke and Duchess was expected at Alnwick on Saturday. We had a very fine day on Tuesday week. Mr. and Mrs. Shield and family, one Mr. Thompson and his sister, Thomasin and myself, set off for the Hills about half past ten o'clock. I rode the distance of five miles on the pony, the rest of the party had a cart.

We went as far as the Common Burn and went into one of the hinds' houses, and had a drink of milk. Mr. Thompson and Mrs. Shield's two eldest daughters and Thomasin, set off for Cheviot and they had the pony with them so as they could ride by turns, which was a good rest for them. The rest of the party returned home about 3 o'clock. We was nothing the worse for our excursion. The Cheviot party got half way up, if they had more time they would have got to the top; but they had the pleasure of seeing the Fern Islands and Bamburgh Castle. They were quite delighted with the day's excursion; they got home about half past nine o'clock. They were very fatigued the next morning, but not so much as I would have thought; but I must leave off, as Thomasin would like to have a chat with you.

I am, your loving Daughter,

GRACE H. DARLING.

Meanwhile the Macfarlanes, full of kindness and by no means averse to entertaining the heroine, wrote to Grace inviting her to come and stay with them and see the Queen on her reported visit to Alnwick. People have wondered why Grace went to so confined a place when she was suffering from a decline, but Alnwick promised air of a sheltered variety. The narrow street would prevent the entry of the winds, and the Macfarlanes were conveniently near the Castle, close against its walls.

There can be no doubt that Grace was greatly tempted by the idea of seeing the young Queen, the idol of her subjects, who had sent Grace fifty pounds.

John and Ann MacFarlane  
to Grace Darling.

Sept. 1st, 1842.

Since you left Bambo, we have not had an opportunity of hearing how you are, but we hope your health is improving, and the numberless enquiries after your health from both rich and poor, makes it imperative on me to request you to write and let us know *how* you *are*, and how you like Wooler, its inhabitants and neighbourhood and if



you think the air is improving your health. The Queen of England passed Alnmouth yesterday about 2 o'clock on her way to Edinburgh ; as she returns there is no doubt but she will pay a visit to Alnwick Castle. His Grace and the Duchess is expected on Saturday first ; his horses and luggage are already come.

I heard from your Brother Wm. a fortnight ago and they were quite well.

Should the Queen come to Alnwick and you have any desire to see her my house is a home for you ; let us hear from you early as we will be unhappy until we hear from you, Dear Cos. We are yours most truly,

JOHN AND ANN MCFARLANE.

## CHAPTER THIRTY-FIVE

### GRACE DARLING'S LAST VOYAGE

THE ride on the pony was Grace's last merrymaking. From the time she arrived at Alnwick, as Thomasin expressed it, "she went like the snow." Her parents remained at the Longstone, where their duty kept them. The visit to Alnwick seemed a wise plan to old Darling, and he arranged to go and see his daughters there. Time is of great value to the old man, with all his responsibilities at the light. He writes in his night watch in the lantern, and one can read his anxiety and wretchedness between the lines.

From William Darling  
to Grace Darling, care of Mr. Shields, at Belford.

Longstone Light,  
Sept. 14th, 1842.

Our dear Daughters,

We received both your letters yesterday as the weather was bad on Monday and the boat did not get here. The news they contained was not so good as we could have wished, but should you be certain of your strength increasing I have no fears for the cough, and as you have given Wooler a fair trial I think your Plan is good in going to Alnwick.

To give you time to be there I think I will not start from here until Monday next the 19th inst. and if you possibly can, be there beforehand.

As I hope to see you soon I will not bother with writing much only that we are all well and Georgian and Wm. are grown two noisy fellows. He is now nearly quite better and can walk between, with hold of a finger or two.

Since they got the stones from Warren the work is going on better. Brook's house is right for the window sills, Wed. m. at 3.0 o'clock. I must go to the Barometer. Our kind love to you both.

WM. DARLING.

Grace and Thomasin went to Alnwick, and the next letter is from Mr. Shield.

Mr. Shield was not happy about Grace. The tone of his next letter was very different from his first. He had seen that Grace's family did not know how to keep inquirers at a distance. The "old maid of a nurse" was Thomasin; the rallying tone in which their late host spoke of her, shewed the chaffing that went on during Grace's stay. The great day on the Cheviots was still something to remember and laugh about.

But underneath the jesting, Mr. Shield's concern for Grace was plain.

From Geo. Shield

to Grace Darling, Narrowgate Street, Alnwick.

Wooler,

September 21st, 1842.

My dear Friend,

With gladness and much anxiety we received yours this morning—nothing could possibly give us all more pleasure than to hear you say you feel better. I hope your Almighty Father will render the means now used, of benefit to the restoration of your health.

O, I am glad to hear that no one has been so cruel as to annoy you and that the Doctor has been so kind as to order you to be kept quiet. My Dear Friend, insist upon it yourself; do not allow anyone to be of the least trouble to you. Nothing can do more injury to you than visitors to put you about.

I have been very dull without you and your sister. My Mrs. is still going about and appears little settled. I hope your Father when he comes to Alnwick will find that all has been done for the best. I have great confidence in Dr. Wilson and I hope no one will advise you to go to any other person for advice—but if any other advice is thought fit to be required, that they will come to you. Should Mr. Wilson restrict you in your diet, do My Dear, just as he directs.<sup>1</sup> I know you will not be angry with me for this freedom. You see this is the only way he can have a fair chance to relieve you. I will come and see you before Saturday. . . . Miss H. Paul sent her manservant to inquire for you, and all your acquaintances when they meet any of us, it is their first question to inquire kindly after you. I hope we will e're long have the real pleasure of seeing you again in Wooler. . . .

I hope your old maid of a nurse is paying every attention to your wants. Please to remember all her neglects and mistakes and tell me of them when I come and I will treat her according to her deserts, depend on it she shall not escape due punishment. We have had a very wet morning with thunder. I am going, you may tell Thomasin, up to the Hind's house where she was to look at two firkins of butter and I will get it all out of him about her jaunt and how she and others behaved to the Pony. Remember me to your kind Landlady and believe me

yours truly,

GEO. SHIELD.

<sup>1</sup> Evidently Grace had a will of her own about such matters.

Mr. Darling arrived according to his promise, and went up to the Castle to pay his respects to the Duke, who was in residence. Grace and Thomasin had not visited any of their friends this time, and the Duke did not even know they were in Alnwick. Dr. Wilson had probably been recommended to Grace by Mr. Shield or Mr. Fender, the Bamburgh doctor.

Old Darling told the Duke of Grace's illness and her present domicile. The Duke at once saw that the airless and sunless home of the MacFarlanes was not the right place for an invalid. The principal traffic of the town passed through the narrow street, turning, as Narrowgate did, out of the square immediately at the entrance to Alnwick by the Belford road and the great walls of the castle completely shadowed the MacFarlanes' windows. Airy and sunny lodgings in a quiet situation must be found, in the high part of the town; Green Batts, or Prudhoe Street, above the church, with the churchyard making an open space, and a sunny pavement before the modest but comfortable and respectable houses. Even to-day Prudhoe Street has a retired and tranquil aspect, lifted above the din of the old town on market days and such. In the Third Duke's time Alnwick was a busier place than it is now and the wooden wheels on the cobblestones made a great clatter. Nor was the Duke content with Dr. Wilson. His own medical attendant, Dr. Barnfather, must be at once called in and Grace put in his charge. The Duchess took the affair in hand; found lodgings and furnished them with extra comforts, while the Duke wrote to Grace.

From the Duke of Nd.

September 23rd, 1842.

Grace Darling,

I much regret that I did not know of your being in Alnwick till yesterday, as I should have been anxious to get you some little comforts during your stay here.

Although the badness of the weather and your own state of health will prevent me from seeing you before you leave this place, I sincerely hope that I may soon hear from you that you are in better health, though you must take great care of yourself during the whole winter and spring. I enclose a trifle which I hope you may find useful during your stay in Bamburgh.

If you think that the air of this place agrees with you better than the air nearer the coast, let me know and I will direct Mr. Barnfather to make arrangements.

Believe me, Grace Darling,  
Your sincere friend,

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Grace was too ill to see the Duke, but the Duchess could and did come to her bedside with Miss Percy. Apparently Her Grace perceived that the invalid was overpowered by her grandeur and importance, for we are told that on the last visit of the Duchess, she came very plainly attired and without any attendant so that Grace should not be embar-

rassed, and knelt for a long time by her bedside. The Duchess Charlotte knew that Grace was rapidly passing beyond the towers and walls of earthly castles ; and having great knowledge of this world, and some perception of a better one, the Duchess knew she herself must put off earthly dignities if she was to reach Grace's simple soul.

Meanwhile the old father and mother went about their work in the lighthouse, watching for every boat that might bring news. The weather was, unfortunately, wild and stormy, bad for communication with the Main. Wind and rain and wave roared round the Longstone, and Andrew Gordon's lighter coming over from North Sunderland with materials for Brooks' house was wrecked on the Wamses. News had come to old Darling when he was at Alnwick, and when he reached home after seeing the Duke and Grace, he wrote all about it.

From William Darling  
to Grace and Governess.

Sunderland,  
Sunday Night, September 25th, 1842.

Dear Grace and Governess,

May it please God that this may find you still improving in health as I write this to let you know that I paid the coach to Charlton as I intended when I left you ; but when I got upon Horsley, I saw that it was impossible to proceed to the Islands, the weather was so bad. I therefore went on to Belford and stopped at Jn. Gibson's all night, and came to Sunderland this day with Mr. Marsden. The weather still continues bad but possibly I may get home to-morrow. I am quite well and all friends at Belford, Balmbro, and Sunderland.

The wreck we heard of at Alnwick was Andrew Gordon's Keel and Boat, Andrew with the foreman and other two, left Longstone to take them into Warren with a Breeze N.E. at 8 o'clock on Thursday morning, and laid them on the N. side . . . (of the Wamses) and with some difficulty got on the rock themselves. The Keel soon beat off the rock and went down in deep water, taking the boat along with her, it being made fast. The men then made a signal, Brooks and T. Smith likewise ; but no boat was able to go to them until Friday morning at 10 o'clock a.m. when a fishing smack's boat went and brought them to the Inner Light. Wm. Swan and others went from Sunderland and brought them on shore here. George Darling fortunately was left at home at Longstone to repair the (coble).

Mr. Gordon was skipper himself.

I hope to hear from you every day after Dinner for some time ; at least three lines each. . . .

*Monday, 10 a.m.* The Weather still continues very bad, there has not been a boat from here to the Longstone since I left and little appearance this day of being able. I hope you will take particular care to keep within doors this weather.

I have just received the hamper of apples from F. Edington, carrier and will return the empty hamper on Saturday and as I have not paid anything for them, you will take care to make it up to John Macf.

## GRACE DARLING AND HER TIMES

Your cousin Ann sent a nice doll and flute for little Brooks and Georgiann. With kindest regards to all friends, and love to you both. I am your afft. Father,

WM. DARLING.

Grace and Thomasin were now in the quiet lodgings on Prudhoe Street but Grace was no better. And the bad weather was continuing too. Grace had never been in a town before, for any stretch of time. Her visits to Alnwick had been for two or three days only, and spent in and out and about, all the time. But now she was shut up like a sea-bird in a cage. The wind was off the sea and she longed to feel it on her face, and to breathe in the warm sunshine. But doctors were afraid of almost any sort of air in 1838.<sup>1</sup> Born and bred on the Longstone, Grace must now be sheltered from everything that was natural to her and that she loved.

Mr. Shield came over to see her and it would be interesting to know what the doctor said to him, and what he reported to old Darling. We can be pretty sure it was not such a reassuring account as Thomasin gave their father.

From Thomasin  
to her parents.

Alnwick,  
October 3rd, 1842.

My dear Father and Mother,

I did not write to you yesterday as I expect Mr. Shield would write to you from Wooler on Sunday.

He left here Saturday afternoon and promised to tell you all particulars. The Doctor and him had a long conversation, but he told me and Grace that everything was going on to his wish and that the means he had used was as he expected. Therefore I hope he thinks her in fair way. I think her rather better but I cannot say that she is getting much stronger yet; her breath is much the same as when I last wrote but I think her appetite a little better. The weather is not very favourable for us as we have never been out since you left us; it is the doctor's order as long as the wind is off the sea for us not to venture out. She is very wishful to be out in the air as she thinks it would do her so much good. Yesterday, Sunday, we were very near tempted to take a walk in the front of the house as it was so warm in the sun, but not knowing the nature of the medicine and his orders not to go, I could not think of it. To-day is a great deal colder here so we are content. Grace has had two good nights sleep and the cough has not been so bad. We had a letter from Brother William yesterday; they are all well and he told us that he would be up to see us this week but could not say what day. He got all the letters together, but the weather was so bad he could have no opportunity to come sooner.

Cousins Mackfarlane continue to do us all the favours they can. Cousin Betsy goes a good many errands for me. Grace has bought

<sup>1</sup> Look at the picture of the cot-bed in which Grace died (facing page 244). It was actually closed up at night by a sliding panel.

J. Mackfarlane a pocket handkerchief. I think I cannot say more at present but remains your affectionate Daughter,

THOMASIN DARLING.

From Grace Darling  
to her parents.

Dear Father and Mother,

As I cannot write you a long letter this time please God in a little time I will write a long one.

I am your loving Daughter,

GRACE H. DARLING.

On this, is written in old Darling's hand, "the last lines she wrote."

The next letters from Grace's father, and sister, Mary Ann Carr, continue with news about the lighthouse, the little details Grace was hungry for. Her mother had not overcome her dislike of leaving her comfortable chimney corner. Mrs. Darling is always thinking of coming ashore, but even when her daughter is lying helpless, so near her end that reports of her death were actually in the papers, Mrs. Darling cannot bring herself to face the journey. A flood of solicitude and affection welled up in Mr. Darling's letters but there are no special messages from the mother to whom Grace was devoted, and on whom she waited affectionately and dutifully all her working life. Mrs. Darling had settled down into being a looker-on at life. To Father fell all the active duties, including seeing Grace.

Georgiann, Grace's "little niece and godchild," is a charming little person, sitting in the lighthouse kitchen writing letters to "my Grace" with a little nail!

From Mary Ann Carr

to Grace Darling at Prudhoe Street, Green Batt, Alnwick.

Longstone,

Sunday Night.

My dear Sister,

We received yours yesterday. We are happy to hear that Grace is improving a little and hope it may please God to restore you again to your former health. Father is going to finish the journals, expecting the pilot off in the morning, so that he has not time to write. Father got back to the Longstone on Tuesday with a strong force of men, Andrew Gordon and some of his men, Wm. Swann and boat crew . . . George Norege is boatman at present. They came off with (. . .) a coble boat-load with wood for Brooks' house. They talk of having it ready for the roof in a week's time. George is not here (he has been) on shore since the ship was wrecked as they have no boat yet. Wm. Thomson has bought another coble belonging Alnmouth and is expected home first opportunity. Dear Grace, you perhaps recollect of Mr. Wilkinson; one of his men is come from London on Saturday to put up a small stove for Little Light. Mr. Duncan goes Main every chance; remains of Saturdays and comes back with rest of the men. Mrs. Duncan is not got back to the Fern House yet but we understand she is coming in a little time; Jane and little Billy is going ashore on Tuesday if weather permit.

She is going to Lesbery to remain some time, they are in hopes to have a playmate for Billy.

Georgiana is learning to talk very well : she says : " Mammy, me better go in coble-boatty, see my Grace and make her better, and give her Tea and cuddle her." She often sits down to write letters to you with a little nail.

I hope you will be able to go out when the weather is fine, but be careful of cold ; we are very happy you are in the midst of your friends and will want for nothing to make you comfortable, but dear sister do not forget the one thing needful and put your trust in Him who is able to support you.

Please to send three pair of little stockings for Georgiana, give them to Thomas Denton. Mother is thinking of going to see you with Mrs. Duncan but is afraid of the journey, please don't neglect writing often.

With love to you both,

MARY ANN CARR.

From Wm. Darling  
to " T. and G.H."

Longstone,  
October 5th, 1842.

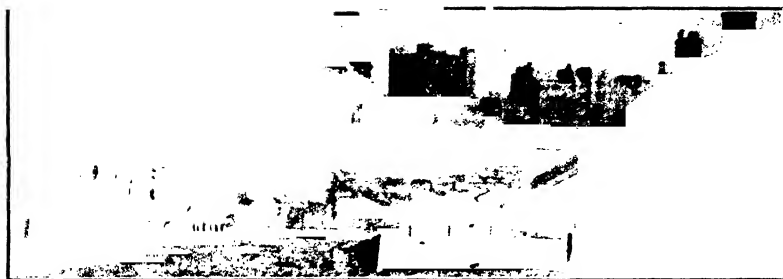
Dear T. and G.H.,

We received yours of Monday last and although not so cheering as we could wish it was nearly all we could expect as the Weather has been so very Bad. But the season of the year, little else can be expected so that the greatest care is required. I suppose that you did not see any of the Archdeacon's people as they passed through Alnwick ? I passed them just at Warrenford and some of the girls waved their hand, but as I gave Mr. Thomas Thorp all the information I could that morning I left, nothing more would be necessary.

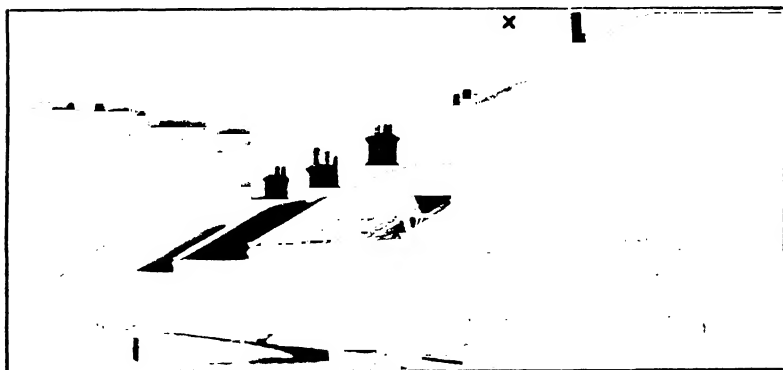
You forgot to tell me if the alteration you got in the letter on the knife was satisfactory (*probably an inscription*). I am afraid you will be much troubled with visitors and inquirers but you will not want advice how to manage that.

Brook's house is expected to be ready for covering in on Monday, but there will be a great deal to do to it after that, Wm. Thompson has bought a large old coble at Alnmouth and got her here last night and G.D. is very throng repairing her to-day, she has been lying on the Banks this two years drying for the fire so that we wish she may not make a worse end than the last did. T. Smith brought his Boat here to-day so that she may be repaired, and as she could not be done, he has left her here to us and got lend of ours a few days. I hope to hear from you on Monday morning. As this is pay night they are most all going on shore. Jane and little Billie left here for Lesbery on Thursday and as they got the Gigg immediately they went on shore, hopes they got well there. He only lost his cold the day before and was very cross.

Mother has not settled upon coming yet but we hear that Bessie Maule has been in. I will perhaps be able to give you a larger letter next time. Georgiann is getting her letter ready, we all join with

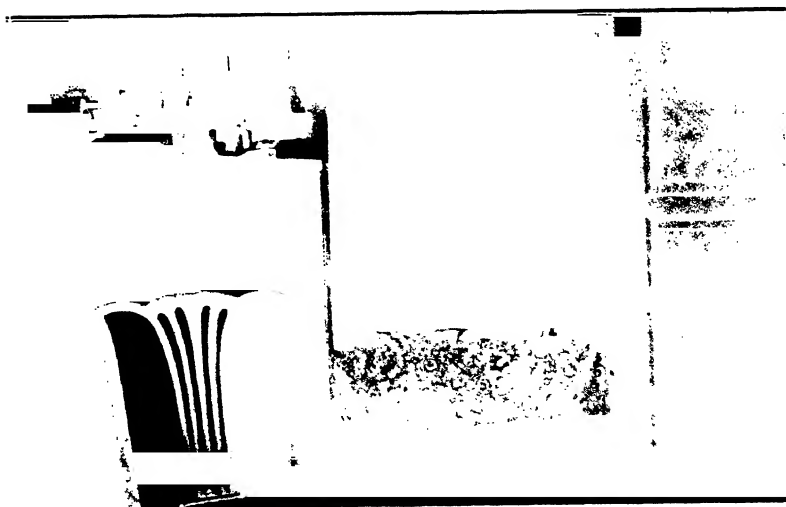


THE GROVE, BAMBURGH



THE POST OFFICE, BAMBURGH

*Photo: H. W. Gibb*



*Photo: Dr. Wilson Burn*

GRACE DARLING'S BED, IN WHICH SHE WAS BORN AND DIED





kind love to you both and may God bless you, both, and send you soon home to us.

Your affect. Father,

WM. DARLING.

(Saturday at 3 o'clock).

Our kind love to K. and J. Mackfarlane. I have forwarded the hamper but they will not get it before next week.

Grace was going to manage the problem of the visitors and inquirers who still pursued her, by escaping from them for ever. It became evident to those around her that Alnwick was doing her no good, on the contrary, she was becoming weaker. It seemed as if she was literally fading away, without pain, or restless nights. Mr. Shield apparently wrote freely to her father.

In spite of the Duchess's ministrations and the solicitude of the Duke, William Darling at last took the matter into his own hands. Grace must come back to Bamburgh to be among her own people. He wrote to the Duke to this effect, and Grace was brought to the Bamburgh cottage (now the post office), where her uncle Marsden lived. The boxbed was there in which Grace had been born, and on it she was laid to die. It was now October. From now on to the spring not a ray of sunshine came into any of the windows of the little stone house in the shadowed street. A side-street flanked it, so that the houses thereon kept out the low beams of the sun which never topped this side of the Grove all winter. In the dark boxbed, airless and confined, the girl who longed for the freedom and freshness of the sea, was to spend her last days until she went out into the light and freedom of eternity.

Her father sent a favourable report of the journey to their noble patrons.

From Wm. Darling  
to the Duke of Nd.

My Lord Duke,

I have the satisfaction to acquaint your Grace that it pleased God to bless the means used to convey my dear daughter here so far, that we think her a little better this morning which the most sanguine soul hardly expect ; and as I am going away to the Islands I have no doubt my daughter Thomasin will fulfil her duty so far as to acquaint Mr. Barnfather with particulars as often as she possibly can. I therefore, with heartfelt gratitude which I cannot attempt to express for the unbounded liberality and kind condescension of my Lord and your Dear Lady, remain with sincere desire to be

Your most obedient Servant,

WM. DARLING.

The letter received prompt answer from the Duke.

From the Duke of Nd.  
to Wm. Darling.

Alnwick Castle,  
October 18th, 1842.

I was very much gratified to learn by your letter that your excellent daughter had born her journey better than could have been expected.

I sincerely hope that she may gradually be restored to health and strength again, and may again be able to enjoy her home at the Longstone.

Her conduct has always been so exemplary that I shall always take a warm interest in her welfare and my only regret is that Grace was not well enough to allow me to see her before she left Alnwick.

Yours truly,

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Now the excitement and attentions of her friends were pressing round Grace more than ever. Rich and poor, high and low, united in their desire to help her. Grace herself was calm, and resigned to her approaching end. Her faith remained in its simplicity and certainty, to comfort her and reassure her for the passing. Already she felt the world and its problems that had been too much for her, were fading into insignificance.

Poor Grace, lying there on her boxbed, with people from far and near still sending presents. Miss St. Paul, a neighbour of Mr. Shield's, entreats her to drink asses' milk and is full of thought for her body; and Mr. Shield is insistent on the needs of her soul. One can see the fear and solicitude of both in the following letters; they express the general concern for one who had become very dear to everyone who knew her. Grace was only twenty-five, and it was terrible to see her leaving the world where she had enjoyed her gifts, her honours, and her fame for so short a time.

Asses' milk, cried Miss St. Paul.

Serious reading, pleaded Mr. Shield.

He evidently feared Grace was not taking the coming ordeal with sufficient gravity. Mr. Shield did not want her to lose one moment in preparing for what seems to him a very risky crossing.

From Miss St. Paul  
to Thomasin Darling.

Ewart Park,  
October 15th, 1842.

Thomasin,

My Brother sends some game to your Sister which we wish she may like—a small basket I will send on Thursday (or before) with the red currant jelly, the apples, and if any Chickens would be acceptable, I could send some fine young ones. We sincerely wish you could send us better accounts of Grace for whom we feel so much interested. Have you named the asses' milk to her? And does she think she could take a little warm from the ass the first thing in the morning? We have known this of benefit in similar cases and would her medical Attendant approve of her trying Asses' Milk? Remember us to your sister and sincerely wishing it might please the Almighty to restore to health one who is so highly respected from her praiseworthy conduct I am, your Friend and Well-wisher,

ANNA MARIA ST. PAUL.

To Grace Darling, c/o Mr. Marsden, Bambro,  
from Geo. Shield.

Wooler,  
October 16th, 1842.

My dear Friend,

I am glad to hear that you have received no harm in your removal from Alnwick. I had a call of Miss St. Paul's servant to-day and am sorry to hear that you are no better. I did expect to have been able to come down to Bamburgh to-day but I could not make it out, I will however come on Tuesday morning. I hope you are still free from pain as you were when I saw you last, and that you get as good sleep as you did then, and I trust in God that although your health has not been restored, that your affliction has not been without profit to your Soul. . . . If you are ill, it is not God's pleasure that your immortal Spirit should derive no benefit from it, on the contrary it is sent with the kindest intentions to wean us from those things which are apt to engross our thought, and to urge and direct us to look forward to a better world beyond the grave. Yes, My Dear Grace, as I said to you before strive continually during your illness to engage your mind on Heavenly subjects. . . .

Do not be wearied with me, my good girl, nor offended with my freedom. I declare to my God that both by night and by day the welfare of your soul is nearest my heart and if I am led to do that which may offend, O lay it all to the anxiety I have for your peace. I hope your kind Sister employs some part of her spare moments to read to you ; perhaps some may tell you or your friends that it will only do you harm to read to you. *Whoever they are believe them not*, they are either ignorant, or false friends.

Strive yourself to endure it, even if it should be a little troublesome ; the enemy of Mankind has a thousand ways to ensnare our souls and never is he more busy than when we are laid on a bed of sickness ; he is afraid that now we have lost the zest for the pleasures and vanities of life, that our minds get engaged with better things and therefore every method is tried to divert us from that which is our duty—but my dear you have a greater and stronger than he to apply to, and if you ask of Him He will give you both strength to listen to those who read, and the will and inclination to hear and profit while hearing good reading. You are now so ill that you cannot read with any degree of comfort yourself ; it is therefore by prayer and the reading of others that your mind can be employed. . . . How cruel, ungenerous and exceedingly Sinful is it for any one to endeavour to prevent you from making every preparation to meet your God. I say again God forbid that any one should advise you to spend your time in any other way than in filling your Mind with the Meditation best suited to the nature of a never-dying being. A man has just rode past whom I knew to have been at Bamburgh. I ran out to him and was glad to hear him say you were a little better. . . .

Your friend,

GEORGE SHIELD.

Many speak of Grace's unusual fortitude and composure during the last days. She made no complaint, nor lost her customary simple cheerfulness. She was full of gratitude to everyone for their kindness.

Grace gave her dearest treasure, the gold watch, to Thomasin, in acknowledgment of Thomasin's unwearied devotion. A short time before her death, she called her family round her and distributed mementoes from her gifts and medals.

But when she was asked about the Trust and besought to sign documents and make decisions, she absolutely refused to have anything to do with the money.

Mrs. Darling managed the journey and was with Grace at the end.

On the twentieth of October at a quarter past eight in the evening Grace died in her father's arms. She had just asked to be raised from the pillow.

Nothing had ever come between Grace and her father. Perhaps the adulation she received would have influenced Grace more had she not had her father beside her with his invincible sagacity, his poise, his sincerity, his dignity, and above all, his kindly love. There was no question that Grace was his favourite child. Wm. Brooks meant a great deal to him, Thomasin also; but Grace had remained with her parents throughout her life as their companion and devoted attendant.

The world had tried to claim her and Grace could not stand the struggle. The storms around the Longstone were less insistent, its rocks less cruel, its currents less treacherous than those which beset the course of a heroine. Grace felt more at home in, and had far less fear of, the other world of which her Bible told her.

Mr. Darling made the arrangements for the funeral, and wrote the following to his children:

Dear Family,                      Bamburgh, Friday Morning, October 21st, 1842.

I can only inform you that our dear Grace died last night, at a quarter past eight p.m. Thursday, and as I feel confident that she has obtained favour with God through her dear Saviour, I hope you will endeavour to submit to the divine will with Christian resignation. . . .

Your affectionate Father,

WM. DARLING.

Further particulars will be forwarded as soon as we can. To be forwarded to the Longstone.

(On the back of this was written)

Dear Brothers and Sister,

You will see by this note that our dear sister died on Thursday night. Bessy was over at Bamburgh yesterday. They were as well as we could expect. The funeral is to-morrow, Monday, 3 o'clock. Brook's<sup>1</sup> letter from Lesbury came here the same day that the boat left this place, and we have had no chance since of getting it off.

WM.

<sup>1</sup> Jane and Georgiann and little Wm. Brooks were evidently still at Lesbury. "Wm." is the eldest brother, to whom Grace gave her Gold Medal from the Royal Humane Society, her most prized gift after the Duke's watch.

Letters of condolence flowed in. Curiously enough, the Duchess wrote, not the Duke. She saw Grace several times, before and after her illness, but up to now the Duke alone had conducted the correspondence with his ward, and also Mr. Darling. It is possible Grace's guardian was too much distressed to write.

From the Duchess Charlotte  
to the Darlings.

Alnwick Castle,  
October 22nd, 1842.

Both the Duke and I have heard with the truest sorrow of the sad termination of your daughter's illness, and we do wish you to know how much we both feel for you, her Father, and all the Family. The Almighty has, however, in removing her to a better world given you all the comfort a true Christian can receive (in the first moments of grief), in taking one who was so *fit* for her removal. Poor Grace's pure mind, virtuous life, and Religious feelings prepared her for the change, and we may now believe her receiving the reward of a well spent life, released from all care and temptation and among the Blessed. Her memory will be ever dear to those who knew her, and all her excellent qualities; and we hope you will all be supported by that God who commands us to cast all our cares on Him—and not suffer in health from the sad trial you have had to bear. May God bless and strengthen you.

I remain,

Your sincere friend,

C. F. NORTHUMBERLAND.

Grace's father kept silence for some time, even though the Duchess's condescension demanded a reply. When he answered, he addressed himself to the Duke, with perhaps an instinctive feeling that the Duke knew Grace better than the Duchess did, for all her kindness, and that he and the Duke understood each other's feelings.

Among William Darling's manuscripts there is one endorsed Sketch of a letter miscarried in which he acknowledges the receipt of a letter from the Duke of Northumberland with a present of tea and sugar, and further writes:

My Lord,

I have to beg you will apologise to the Duchess for me not answering or thanking Her Grace of so kind and good a letter which I recd. from her; but she may rest assured it was and is duly valued, that there was no want of gratitude but want of fortitude and to employ another person was not doing my duty, nor could be satisfactory to Her Grace. A copy will be found with each branch of my family when I am no more, not so much for its kind condescension, which can only truly be felt by us, but good Christian advice which is contained in it, and may be useful at all times.

Archdeacon Thorp wrote also. He was a man of downright character and detested sentimentality. One of his family writes: "She was a quiet unassuming girl (as my Father has told me) and a great deal of nonsense has been written about her."

The Archdeacon did not add to it. He writes simply and sincerely.

From Archdeacon Thorp  
to Wm. Darling.

College, Durham,  
December 22nd, 1842.

My dear Sir,

I hear with great pain and regret that my young friend, your excellent daughter, has been removed from us.

No one I assure you can lament her death more sincerely than I do; and none valued her more highly, not only for those qualities which had secured to her the public interest and admiration, but for others which I found in her still more valuable in my eyes, and which will endure for ever.

Accept my sincere condolence and convey the same to Mrs. Darling.

Mrs. Thorp and all my family will grieve when they hear of this event as truly as I do, but they are not with me here.

I am, with much esteem,

Your sincere friend,

CHAS. THORP.

The Press throughout the country teemed with notices of her death, the funeral, and obituaries. If anything had been needed to preserve her fame and enshrine Grace Darling in the hearts of the nation more firmly, her early death effected it. "The maiden of the Farnes" remained her gentle self; age now could never wither her.

Storm raged throughout the preparations for the funeral and on the day the weather was so bad one of the papers says that three of the brothers could not get ashore.

A young man from Durham followed; repute has it, he was dear to Grace.

*Berwick Advertiser*, October 29th, 1842.

"THE FUNERAL.

"This melancholy event took place at Bamburgh on Monday, 24th inst. At an early hour of the afternoon gentlemen from a distance of many miles round began to arrive, and at the hour appointed, 3 o'clock p.m. the village was crowded with strangers, both rich and poor, many of whom had come a long way to pay their last respects to the memory of the deceased. Exactly at 4 o'clock the sad procession moved on to the place of interment, the coffin being carried by 4 young men belonging to Bamburgh, supported by the following gentlemen as pall bearers:—Wm. Barnfather Esq. from Alnwick Castle; Robert Smeddle Esq. Bamburgh Castle; Rev. M. Taylor, North Sunderland; Dr. Th. Fender, Bamburgh; followed by ten of her relatives, including her father and brother William from the Coquet Island, the stormy state of the weather preventing her other brothers getting from the Fern Islands, although situated only a short distance off. Next were Mr. Evans, officer of Customs, Bamburgh, and a young man from Durham, who wore the mourning emblem of intimate friends of the family. An immense concourse of people of all grades in society followed, many of whom were observed to be bathed in tears. The scene, altogether, was deeply impressive and affecting."

**PART FIVE**  
**“THERE REMAINETH . . .”**





## CHAPTER THIRTY-SIX

### HER MONUMENT

**A** HUNDRED years works havoc in most parts of the countryside, and a visit to the homes of most celebrities of the early nineteenth century finds few traces of their environment. But that far away corner of Northumberland where Grace Darling spent her short life is little changed. Time moves slowly in Northumberland, and the solidity of its traditions withstands its devastations. The old places, old families and old activities persist. Those who still admire her may be interested in knowing what remains to commemorate her and those associated with her in the life-saving movement.

The Castle, though in part rebuilt, still looks down on the village clustered round the green exactly as in Grace Darling's time with most of the old houses standing.

The Longstone and the lighthouse on the Inner Fern remain, although the latter is now worked automatically and no one lives thereon.

The seabirds still come yearly in their thousands to even greater loneliness, for no families are now allowed upon the islands, only three light-keepers upon the Longstone, and the Islands have been bought as a Bird Sanctuary and belong now to the National Trust.<sup>1</sup>

Grace is still the beloved heroine of the North, and every year hundreds of the Scottish fishing people who come in with the herring-boats, repair to St. Aidan's Churchyard.

The story of her Monument is as chequered as that of her brief brave life.

When she died the question was, of course, of general interest. The first suggestion was the restoration of the Chapel of St. Cuthbert, upon the Great Farne Island (i.e. the Inner Farne), with a tablet within the building to the memory of the deceased.

About this time Mr. Thomas Dickenson wrote to the venerable Archdeacon Thorp, dated Heighington, November 21st, 1842 :

"The very locality is a strong ground to plant there again the standard of the Cross. . . . Would it not rejoice the heart of every

<sup>1</sup> The outer group of islands was acquired by the late Lord Armstrong with Bamburgh Castle ; the inner group descended from Archdeacon Charles Thorp to his grandson, the Rev. C. Thorp, of Ellerton Abbey, Richmond, Yorks. Both groups were bought by public subscription on an appeal which Lord Grey of Fallodon made at the instigation of Collingwood Thorp, Esq., who was the chief executive throughout ; the transfer was made in August 1925.

Christian if this ancient church were once more restored and dedicated to the service of God, after having been in ruins for above 1,000 years ? ”

Her Majesty the Queen sent £20 to the Venerable Archdeacon Thorp, in furtherance of the above project. The Queen Dowager contributed £10. Archdeacon Thorp also gave £10, and the Lord Bishop of Durham ten guineas.

This did not meet with general favour, however, as naturally the Darlings themselves and their Bamburgh friends desired a monument in Bamburgh churchyard. Messrs. Thorp and Dickson appear to have consulted Mr. Smeddle.

From R. Smeddle  
to Messrs. Thorp and Dickson.

Bamburgh Castle,  
November 17th, 1842.

Gentlemen,

Grace Darling did not make a Will, a few days before her death she distributed the little presents she had given to her amongst her Brothers and Sisters, but did not interfere with money matters.

All I know about the monument is that Mrs. Sharp of Clare Hall has placed in my hands ten pounds for such purpose “ she requests me to take charge of a ten pound note and appropriate it to the expense of a monument to be erected to the memory of Grace Darling in Bamburgh Church Yard.”

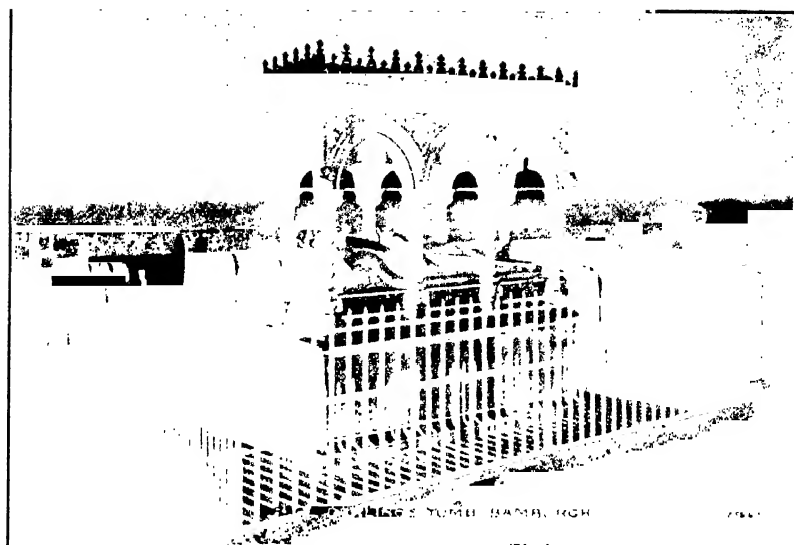
This is all I know about it.

I am, Gentlemen, Your obt. servant,  
(Sgd.) R. SMEDDLE.

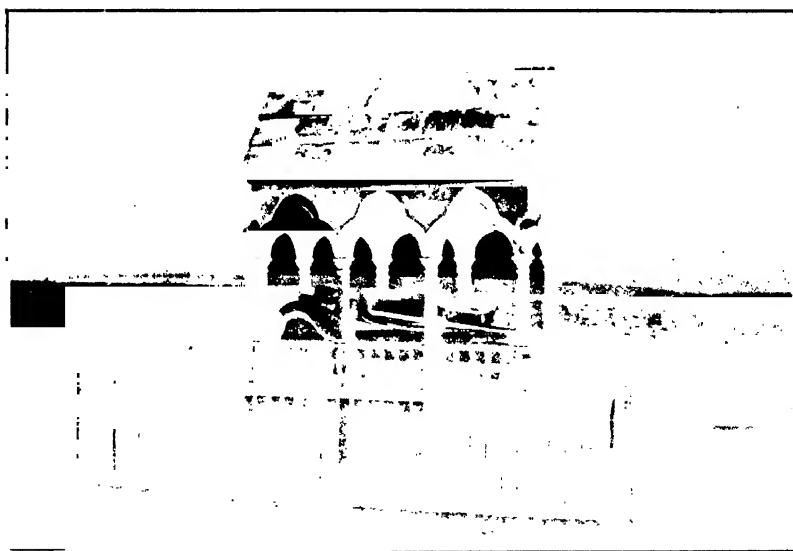
This proposition was by far the most popular.<sup>1</sup> It was decided to erect a plain tombstone to the south-west of the church opposite the Horsleys' cottage, where Grace was born and where her brother Job was buried ; and at the west end of the church so that it could be seen far off by mariners aboard their vessels, a monument intended to represent a canopied tomb of the early part of the thirteenth century. The recess for the figure was formed by three arches with trefoil headings, these being supported by slender circular shafts. Within the recess, in a recumbent attitude, was a full length figure of the heroine, and by her side lay the oar. The canopy was made to rest upon a basement of substantial masonry which was procured from a neighbouring quarry, whilst the figure was carved of Portland stone specially procured for the purpose. This was erected in 1844 by Mr. C. Raymond Smith, 246 Marylebone, London.

The monument, however, soon began to decay. The soft and porous nature of the stone which constituted the figure part of the memorial was found to be crumbling fast away ; in fact, in a few years the principal

<sup>1</sup> The *Gateshead Observer* stresses the suggestion that the £10 should be devoted to erecting a lighthouse as monument !



GRACE DARLING'S TOMB TO-DAY



THE ORIGINAL CENOTAPH



parts would have been obliterated. This is somewhat remarkable, inasmuch as the Portland stone failed, while that procured from the immediate neighbourhood was quite perfect. The estimated cost of restoring the monument was £100. Mr. Medd was not only fortunate in raising the necessary sum, but what is equally important, he ascertained that Mr. Smith, the designer of the monument, was still alive, and had in his possession the original model which he worked from some 41 years ago. Mr. Smith was commissioned to undertake the work of restoration, and in order to obtain a more durable block of stone, Mr. Medd along with the Rev. D. Dixon Brown, of Unthank Hall, and Mr. J. T. Leather of Middleton Hall, applied to Sir W. G. Armstrong for his advice on the matter. The latter gentleman, with his usual generosity, at once placed at their disposal a fine block of stone, quarried in his own grounds, near to his mansion at Craggside. In 1885, in addition to the replacing of a new figure, the whole of the outer stone was repaired, and the part between the basement and outer rails was laid with cement of variegated colours. The palisading which surrounds the monument was newly painted, and an inscription put upon the monument.

A stained-glass window, commemorative of the event, was also placed at the east end of the north transept. It depicts Faith, Hope and Charity, and was placed there largely through the exertions of the Rev. A. O. Medd.

But Grace was not allowed to rest in peace. The monument on which so much had been spent a few years ago, was almost demolished during a heavy gale in the autumn of 1893. The canopy was shivered to pieces and still lies in the churchyard, a hopeless ruin. Mr. Medd's successor as vicar of Bamburgh, Mr. Long, who also had done much to restore the church, took the matter in hand and once again the cenotaph was restored.

The original effigy of Grace with her oar beside her, now lies in the church, and outside to the south-west is a plain tombstone with the following inscription :

In memory of  
 Thomasin Darling  
 Wife of William Darling, of the Farne Islands,  
 who died October 16th, 1848,  
 aged 74 years ; also of  
 Grace Horsley Darling,  
 aged 25 years ; also of  
 Job Horsley Darling,  
 their son,  
 who died December 6th, 1830,  
 aged 20 years ; the above  
 William Darling  
 late of the Longstone Lighthouse,  
 and the beloved husband of Thomasin Darling  
 who died at Bamburgh, May 28th, 1865,  
 aged 79 years.

The plan to restore St. Cuthbert's Chapel was also proceeded with. Archdeacon Thorp, with his usual open-handedness, took on himself to augment the fund already raised, and in 1848 the restoration was completed. Every precaution was taken to preserve intact all traces of the ancient masonry, and to allow nothing to be introduced that would in the slightest detract from the building. The window at the east of the structure was enlarged and now consists of three lights with trefoil headings surmounted with flowery tracery. One of the most pleasing features in the restoration was the furnishing of the interior with oak benches from Durham Cathedral.

In the chapel is a plain stone monument which bears the following inscription :

To the memory  
of  
Grace Horsley Darling,  
a native of Bamburgh,  
and an inhabitant of these Islands,  
who died Oct. 20, A.D. 1842,  
Aged 26 years.

“ Pious and pure, modest, and yet so brave ;  
Though young, so wise, though meek, so resolute.”

“ Oh ! that winds and waves could speak  
Of things which their united power called forth  
From the pure depths of her humanity ;  
A maiden gentle, yet at duty's call,  
Firm and unflinching as the lighthouse reared  
On island rock, her lonely dwelling place,  
Of like immovable rock itself that braves,  
Age after age the hostile elements.” WM. WORDSWORTH.

To our mind, the best poem ever written about her, recorded the restoration of her cenotaph :

#### GRACE DARLING'S GRAVE.

“ In Bamburgh's peaceful churchyard,  
There sleeps in quiet grave,  
Aall left iv a fair maiden,  
As guid as she was brave ;  
Who fear'd not ocean's fury,  
But wiv a singull heart,  
Went forth to save the shipwreck'd  
From death's devourin' dart.

From John o' Groat's to Land's End,  
The nobill deed was told,  
How aall alone, unaided,  
An unselfish maiden bold,  
Forth to the fated Forfarshire  
Rowed oot wiv might and main,  
To save the lives iv sailors,  
She ne'er might see again.

And when the wark was ower,  
 When ocean lost its prey,  
 Again went back the maiden  
 To deeds iv ivvery day ;  
 Ne nowt had she iv 'onners,  
 Ne cravin' for lip praise,  
 Her watchword still—her duty—  
 She stuck te'd aall her days.

And now she rests in silence,  
 That brave Northumbrian lass ;  
 And strangers' hearts beat strangely  
 As by her grave they pass ;  
 But shall she not have 'onner ?  
 Aye, surely ! lang as Northmen  
 Think of that fearful neet.

An' Airmstrang's to the rescue  
 Te keep that memory green ;  
 Se seemly steyn frae Crag-side  
 Shall sanctify the scene  
 Where beauty, youth, and courage  
 Triumph'd ower wind and wave,  
 And where brave thowts still kindle  
 Beside Grace Darling's Grave !

*Newcastle Weekly Chronicle, 1884.*

## CHAPTER THIRTY-SEVEN

### HER FAMILY

WHEN Grace died the light went out of William Darling's life. His wife and Thomasin had never given, and could never give him that close and sensitive understanding of his vigorous and balanced intellect which came from Grace. Grace was his close companion, and the publicity they shared drove them even more together in their common need of defence.

Thomasin gave up her dressmaking and went to the lighthouse to look after her parents, but she could not take Grace's place with her father. He was not a man to allow his private grief to intrude on his duties, or his relations with the other members of his family, but it is stated that when Thomasin shewed the presents and relics to the visitors who still came in streams to the Longstone, William Darling always immediately left the room. He could not bear to see the curiosity-mongers glutting their appetites.

But William Darling remained a commanding figure in himself, the unquestioned head of his family circle to the end of his days. Thomasin and Georgiann made their home with him, together with William Brooks and his wife Jane and their growing family. His grandchildren were



round him, his health magnificent, his vitality unimpaired. After an interval of three months he continued his entries in his Journal, and made his last, just fifty years after he began it ; November 1st, 1810, to October 30th, 1860.

He was succeeded by his son William, William Brooks being then light-keeper at Whitby, and went ashore with the faithful Thomasin, where he lived at The Wyndings until May, 1865. The profits from the visitors do not seem to have amounted to very much ; people did not pay a great deal for lodgings in those days, and it would have been impossible for any member of the Darling family to have economized when the comfort of their guests was concerned. They were not the sort of people to amass fortunes. Money meant so little to them compared to the all important issues of kindness and hospitality. After eighty years of frugal living and ceaseless activity on behalf of his family and fellows, William Darling had nothing to show for it other than the money collected for him and Grace, and the respect and admiration of everyone who ever came in contact with him. He left his memory to the world, possibly as good a gift as any fortune ever gathered together for the benefit of mankind.

The little parcel of letters give the story of his death, they show Thomasin's simple request to their dear friend Mr. Dickson of Dickson and Thorp, to attend the funeral, his kind reply, and the final word of Mr. Darling's worldly goods.

From Thomasin Darling                      Wynding House, Bambrough,  
to William Dixon, Esq., Alnwick.                      May 29th, 1865.

My dear Sir,

You would be sorry to learn that my father after a short but severe illness died here on Sunday morning at ten minutes before one o'clock.

I trust that if convenient for you, you will favour us, so far, as to be present at his funeral which we have fixed to take place on Tuesday (to-morrow) at 3 o'clock p.m.

My father informed me previous to his death that he had executed a deed of Settlement. As my brothers will be all here to-morrow perhaps you might bring said document with you, and by reading it in their presence enable us all to understand how matters have been arranged, and with kind regards,

I am, My dear Sir,  
Yours truly,  
THOMASIN DARLING.

From N. Dickson  
to Miss Th. Darling.

Aln.  
May 29th, 1865.

Dear Madam,

I received your letter and was sorry to hear of the death of your father. I have been unwell for some months and do not feel equal

to be at the funeral to-morrow. I did not get your letter till too late to-night to search for papers but I will do so in the morning and send what is necessary by the express train to-morrow to Belford Station at 1-30. You better have a messenger at the train to receive the parcel. I am sorry I cannot attend the funeral, which I would like much to have done.

With true sympathy for your loss.

I remain, Madam,  
Yours faithfully,  
(Sgd.) W. DICKSON.

From Benjamin Morton  
to Messrs. Dicksons.

North Sunderland,  
November 21st, 1865.

Gentn,

In reply to your letter of yesterday, I respectfully beg to state that the late Mr. William Darling of Bamburgh had £73. 6. 8. as a Superannuation Allowance granted to him for life by the Trinity House; the pension was paid up till the 24th day of March 1865 and there is still due £12. 16. 6. for the intervening time up till his death.

I am Gentn,  
Your Obedient Servant,  
BENJAMIN MORTON

Wyndings House, Bamburgh,  
November 23rd, 1865.

Dear Sir,

I have forwarded the papers sent on the 20th after having Mr. Rutherford to inspect what belonged to my Dear Father and I beg to let Mr. Dickson know there is no money in the Savings Bank nor any other Bank but what you know of. Nor any other property in my Dear Father's name.

I am with desire your  
Humble Servant,  
THOMASIN DARLING.

PS. I shall be glad to have it settled as soon as convenient to Mr. Dickson.

*Notes Enclosed.*

WM. DARLING.

Furniture—Thos. Rutherford, Joiner, Bamburgh.

*Children.*

Wm. Darling, Longstone Light House.

Thomasin Darling, Bamburgh, Wynding.

Robt. Darling, Mason, Alnwick.

Wm. Brooks Darling, Coquet Island.

George Alexr. Darling, Carpenter, No. Sunderland.

Eliz. wife of Jno Maule of No. Sunderland, Draper, his only child

Jno Maule aged about 21 serving time at Berwick with Mr. Boag, Draper.

Georgina Dixon Carr only daur. of Mary Ann Carr wife of Geo. Carr of Bamburgh, both dead—G.D.C. lives with Thomasin Darling.

---

No money in Savings Bank nor at Stores in his own name.

Funeral exps £30.

Drs. Bill £10.

2 months due from Trinity Ho. apply to Mr. Morton, No. Sunderland.

---

W. D. died on May 28th, 1865.

Grace's fortune had passed automatically to her parents. On her mother's death in 1848, it became her father's. Mr. Darling had left everything he possessed unconditionally to his wife, but after she had gone he considered Thomasin, who had nursed Grace so faithfully and had tended him and her mother when Grace died, must take her mother's place and have the furniture and personal possessions, before the claims of his eldest son. Thomasin had given up her calling for her daughterly duties. The bequest to her carried no distrust or censure of William.

William Darling divided the money equally between his family with the strictest justice. By the will in 1847 one-seventh each went to the children, William, Thomasin, Robert, George Alexander, and William Brooks; then one-seventh to his grandchild Georgiann, whom he had brought up as a daughter; and one-seventh between the two sons of Elizabeth Grace Maule who was dead.

It was an exceedingly just and simple will and it is difficult to know why he thought it necessary to convey it as a Trust, with four illustrious trustees, except that all this association with the Duke and the Duke's solicitors had mesmerised him into a sense of the immense responsibilities appertaining to property in cash.

He empowered his Trustees—the Rev. Wm. Nicholas Darnell, Archdeacon Thorp, the Rev. Charles Thorp, William Dickson the younger,

“to pay Thomasin on her request in writing a sum not to exceed ten pounds in any one year.”

This is plainly modelled on the Trust which allowed Grace to draw this same amount yearly. Ten pounds appeared to Mr. Darling a correct allowance for a daughter's expenses.

When Thomasin succeeded to her share she also sought Trustees for her two hundred pounds. She empowered the Rev. Charles Thorp, William Dickson the younger and Patrick Thorp Dickson to stand possessed thereof and to pay the interest thereof to Thomasin free from marital control, with all the rigmarole about children and grandchildren, if they did or did not exist—though Thomasin by now was nearly sixty, and had never been attractive. The old maid, her friends and family

had always called her. Still every possible precaution was taken in case of a wedding and progeny. The subsequent complications that arose were due to several reasons ; first of all, the time that intervened between the execution of the first Trust, executed in 1840, and William Darling's death in 1865, and again between his death and Thomasin's in 1886. The Trustees had been men of years, and all were gone when old Darling died. Their executors had to take up the threads.

Not only that ; a law pertaining to stamp duties and trusts had been passed which made the disposition of property under the old law highly questionable, and the long-suffering firm of Dickson & Thorp had to write innumerable letters to a London firm of experts, for advice on various subtle legal points. A mass of documents and correspondence relating to these Trusts shews the immense amount of trouble evoked. The Trustees died and were replaced, the partners in the firm passed on and were replaced, but the Trusts continued. There were no children or grandchildren of Thomasin's to receive the very small amount the fortune dwindled to after it had been divided between seven of the family.

Notes exist that passed between a new partner in the firm, who also had to be instructed in the complications like the Rev. Darnell's executors. He had a sense of humour. The Darlings' money affairs had become a comedy.

"As to £40 15. 1. it is under her Father's will and my wish would be that she would take out £40 (ten a year) and finish it.<sup>1</sup> Such an erection of Trust Machinery for £40 15. 1. is like breaking a fly on a wheel."

That was the end of the fortune raised for Grace's lifetime, and her heirs.

Her family remain. Georgiann married her cousin, William Dixon, a great Bamburgh character, whose son now takes his place, and with his wife and family still lives at The Wyndings. The Darlings' old home breathes out the dignity and quiet of well-ordered self-respecting lives. The old furniture, the prints, the books, the relics, are in a fitting setting.

At Gateshead, Grace's namesake, the grand-daughter of William's eldest son, maintains the family traditions.

At Seahouses, Mrs. Roberts, George Alexander's daughter, lives in her own house, with its old-fashioned comfort, and indescribable air of dignity and reserve.

All the sons, except Job, have left descendants.

In the services, whether of Trinity or the Merchant Marine, and in their respective callings by sea or land, the Darling family preserves the Darling tradition of simplicity, of good citizenship, and that indomitable Northumbrian pride whose other name is self-respect. Wherever you meet one of William Darling's descendants, you are aware of a curious strength of character, unobtrusive, yet arresting.

<sup>1</sup> This Thomasin gladly did.

They honour his memory, and the memory of Grace, but it is the most difficult thing to draw them out about it. They are not a family of talkers, and while they realise a certain responsibility to their illustrious ancestors they have never paraded incidents in their careers and unfortunately have never talked much even between themselves, so that there remains very little of family traditions in their minds.

## CHAPTER THIRTY-EIGHT

### HER BOAT

GRACE DARLING's boat passed into the keeping of the son George Alexander, at Seahouses. "I can assure you of her being built at Tweedmouth in Berwick-on-Tweed by Mr. Little Jones and named *The Darlings* and built as near as I can recollect in the year of 1828 and used by my father up to 1856 or 7. As I was the youngest in the family and in the ship and boat building trade, he gave her to me, thinking I would be best able to keep her up," he wrote: also, "I refused the Duke of Nd.'s application through a Revd. gentleman applying for His Grace," he wrote when selling it. It was bought from him in 1873 by one of the great names in Northumbria, Colonel John Joicey, M.P. for North Durham, of Newton Hall, Stocksfield-on-Tyne, and was placed by Mrs. Joicey at the disposal of the Shipwrecked Fishermen and Mariners' Royal Benevolent Society, for the Tynemouth Maritime Exhibition, September and October 1882, where it was eagerly visited by about 23,700 persons as a relic of peculiar interest in connection with the Society's first formation in 1839.<sup>1</sup>

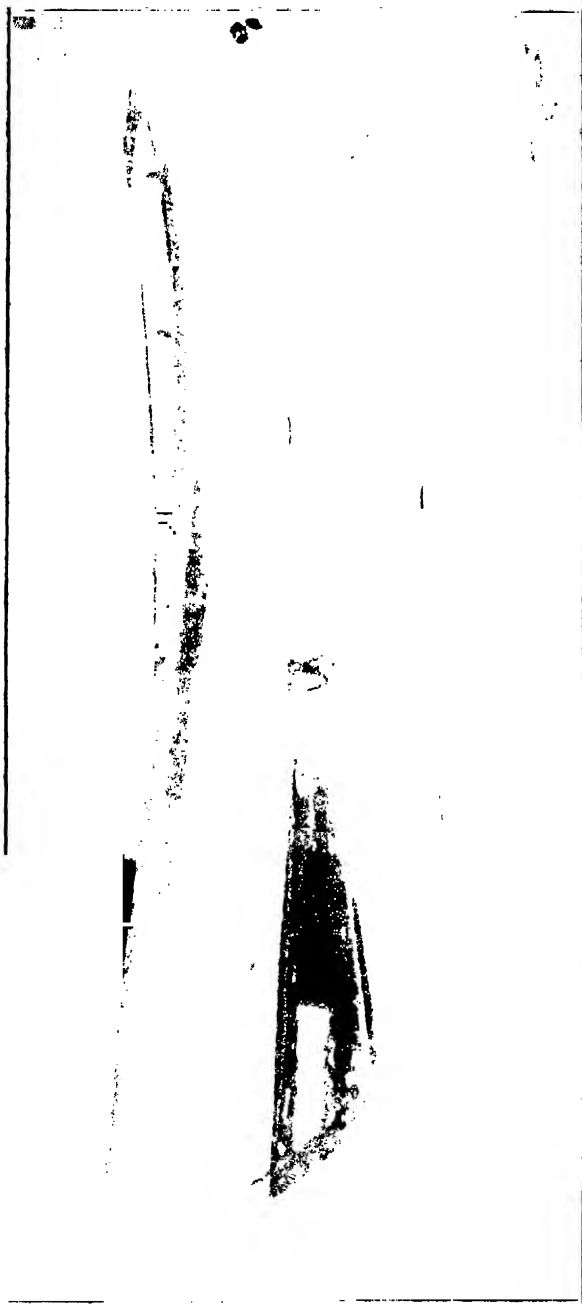
Mrs. Joicey lent the Society the coble again for its exhibit at the Great International Fisheries Exhibition in London, 1883. We hear of George Alexander in connection with the boat when he wrote to someone about the souvenirs he was distributing (as usual with the Darling family, gratuitously). His request for the picture of the coble revealed his affection for the much prized family relic. It may have been sold in a poor fishing season. The Darlings were never men of means.

Seahouses, Chathill,  
December 7th, 1883.

Dear Sir,

I am happy to lett you know I have received your letter and money all safe with many thanks to you for your kindness and trouble that you have taken. I have wrote to Mr. Buck at the same time, likewise have sent him a small piece of the boat and will send you a piece at the same time as I have told Mr. Buck it is nothing nice to look at but it is a piece of the very identical boat. When I repainted her after

<sup>1</sup> A terrible storm in the Bristol Channel, together with some fearful calamities to fishing-boats with great loss of life, so impressed the minds of the public, still aflame with the memory of Grace Darling's deed, that the Shipwrecked Mariners' and Fishermen's Society was formed that year.



GRACE HORSLEY DARLING'S COBLE AT THE NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE EXHIBITION, 1887

*From a photograph lent by her Grand-niece, Grace Horsley Darling.*



she was given to me I preserved the piece plank (?) I took out. It is very rough but is the same as two or three gentlemen has got before, thinking you would like a piece of it. Sir, do you think I might take the liberty of asking Mr. Buck the favour of sending me a photograph of the part of the exhibition where the boat was, I have seen one a lady has here about six inches in size we think it such a good likeness<sup>1</sup> of it—with kind regards from yours sincerely,

GEORGE DARLING.

P.S. Dr. Sir I think you will understand me it is the photograph of the boat as they stood in the exhibition.

The coble was further exhibited at the Liverpool International Exhibition of Navigation in 1886, at the Royal Mining, Engineering, etc. Exhibition in 1887 at Newcastle-on-Tyne, organized in commemoration of the Queen's Jubilee, and in 1888, for the first time in Scotland, at the Glasgow International Exhibition of Industry, Science and Art, again under the auspices of the Shipwrecked Mariners' Society.

The mast and the tiller appear to have remained in George Alexander's possession, however, and a subsequent letter to Mr. Daniel Atkinson reveals their disposal to the friend who came to the rescue and prepared the first true story of Grace Darling. The formal Dear Sir, was now My Dear Friend, which meant a good deal from a Darling in George Alexander's position to a gentleman of means and reputation like Daniel Atkinson.

The tiller is now hanging up in the room of one of Mr. Atkinson's relatives in Cheshire, Mrs. Beanland, whose father was one of Mr. Atkinson's executors.

Subsequently the coble was presented by Colonel Joicey's daughter, Lady John Joicey-Cecil, to the Royal National Lifeboat Institution in 1913, the only condition attached to the gift being that Grace Darling's boat should remain in Grace Darling's county, Northumberland.

The coble was thereon placed on exhibition at the Dove Marine Laboratory, Cullercoats.

In 1924 it was proposed to bring the boat to London in connection with the Centenary Celebrations of the Institution, and a paragraph appeared in the *Daily Mail*, October 24th, to say the boat would form a feature of the Lord Mayor's Show, but the boat was found to be too frail to move without considerable risk.

It was, however, found possible to bring her to Newcastle-on-Tyne for the North-East Coast Exhibition, 1929, and the removal, which had to be effected with the utmost care, was entrusted to the crew of the Cullercoat Lifeboat.

The first person to inspect the coble was the Prince of Wales as President of the Exhibition, when he came to open it, and for the next six months there was a constant stream of visitors so that the Exhibition authorities were amazed to see how much it attracted the general public.

<sup>1</sup> The one reproduced.



Towards the end of the Exhibition Messrs. Wailes Dove Bitumastic Ltd., of Newcastle-on-Tyne, the manufacturers of Bitumastic Enamels, who had a stall close by the coble, asked that they might shew their interest by paying for her to be repaired and strengthened so that she might last another hundred years. The boat was therefore surveyed by one of the R.N.L.I.'s own surveyors, and she has been put into complete repair without altering her appearance.

Lord Armstrong, owner of Bamburgh Castle, then offered a piece of land at Bamburgh, overlooking the sea, and headed the subscription list of the appeal for funds to provide a fitting permanent home. These have still to be raised.

Many letters from and appertaining to Grace and her family are still existent, together with countless mementoes, the many prints, the commemorative articles, all illustrating the civilization of her time. Before they are dispersed, destroyed and forgotten, which they must be as the years go on, it would seem a wise and fitting tribute to her memory if the proposed building that will shelter the boat could be enlarged to form a beautiful museum, in the possession of the R.N.L.I. The deed of the North Sunderland Lifeboatmen and the activities of the Dukes of Northumberland for the protection of their northern coast, might also find a permanent record there. Nor should the building of the Longstone Lighthouse and the other lighthouses upon the Farnes be without memorial.

In their life they were not divided. . . .

## CHAPTER THIRTY-NINE

### THE LIFEBOATMEN

SEAHOUSES, the unspoiled little harbour of North Sunderland, still sees the herring fleet put in ; the lifeboat still is kept there, and the quaint old Inn, the Bamburgh Castle, is still the place where the benefactions of the Crewe Trustees to Mariners are administered.

The gallant men who put off from Seahouses and reached the wreck half an hour too late, have been succeeded by their children, their grandchildren and great-grandchildren. The present Coxswain of the North Sunderland boat, James Robson, has been twenty-five years in the service, his father, Michael, was Coxswain twenty years, and his father and grandfather before him served in a direct line from that time. Descendants of the crew still live in Seahouses pursuing their ancient craft of fishing, and plying between the islands and the Main, though motor-boats are universally in use.

Good work is being done at Seahouses of direct advantage to its lifeboat crew. The harbour, which has been knocked about by violent seas and is in a very dangerous condition, is, largely through the interest and exertions of Sir Walter Runciman, being deepened and restored. There is no harbour that gives shelter to deep sea vessels from Leith

to Blyth. A safe harbour at Seahouses in which vessels might shelter in time of need is visioned from those on the look out for the saving and protection of our merchant service.

The work of the National Royal Lifeboat Institution goes on steadily ; supported by voluntary contributions. The Honorary Secretary of the North Sunderland Association for thirty-one years, is Lewis Ross, the grandson of Hugh Ross at whose house in Bamburgh the inquest on the *Forfarshire* was held.

The dangers to which lifeboatmen are exposed, are little realized by those who live in cities and inland. The men face not only the risk of drowning, but of being battered, crushed and maimed by the violence of the waves. We take their patient readiness to go out to help those upon the deep as a duty belonging to their calling. Public appreciation of the lifeboatmen cannot be expressed in terms of sentimentality. They need aid.

The Royal National Lifeboat Institution exists to find out better and better ways of life-saving, more efficient boats and apparatus, as well as to care for the families and dependents of those who perish. If everyone who loves his country and his fellows, paid the smallest yearly due in recognition of his part in this business of Britannia with her Trident . . .

## CHAPTER FORTY

### THE DUKES OF NORTHUMBERLAND

ALNWICK CASTLE still dominates the town and the neighbourhood ; and the firm of Dickson and Thorp remains with members of the family in the firm. Mr. Collingwood Thorp is the Duke's Agent. Narrowgate and Prudhoe Street are much as they were a hundred years ago.

The Third Duke who died childless was succeeded by his brother Algernon. The Fourth Duke with his wife the Duchess Eleanor maintained an undeviating friendship with the Darlings. Old Darling's *Journal* records a visit to them at Alnwick Castle, to consult them about business, and they visited him at the Longstone.

When the *True Story of Grace Darling* was published Thomasin sent a copy to the Duchess Eleanor, who replied in the friendliest terms, recalling her visit of twenty years ago to the Longstone.

The Fourth Duke was one of the outstanding figures of the Lifeboat movement. Even as his father, the Second Duke, took the keenest interest in his soldiers, so the Fourth Duke cared for the welfare of sailors in the ranks. The Lifeboat Institution had been passing through low waters, consequent on the general lean years following the war. Duke Algernon became President in 1851. Under the impulse of his powerful and sympathetic nature the Institution began a career of new and uninterrupted usefulness, in the course of which it has absorbed all the local Lifeboat Associations, has left no clearly indicated danger-spot

unprotected and has become indeed a National Institution. He himself provided lifeboats for all the important stations on the coast of Northumberland. He realized, however, that the first step was to obtain an improved Lifeboat and offered a prize of a hundred guineas, appointing a committee of experts to report on the models sent in. The self-righting model used to-day was evolved in consequence. Besides his unflinching efforts on behalf of the Lifeboatmen Duke Algernon was deeply interested in the establishment of Sailors' Homes, for a class of men who, as he said, "were too often only saved from the perils of the sea to be wrecked on shore," and himself founded one at North Shields. The Sailor Duke became First Lord of the Admiralty in 1852 and during his administration the foundations of our steam Navy in its present form were laid, and many improvements in the lot of the sailor carried out.

Like his brother, the Third Duke, the Fourth Duke was deeply interested in science, accompanied Sir. J. Herschel on his astronomical survey to the Cape of Good Hope, and devoted himself later to the study of archaeology and especially Egyptian antiquities, supporting their study and Lane's gigantic work the Arabic Lexicon. Like the First Duke, he devoted much time to rebuilding farms and cottages, and promoting up-to-date farming.

To the present day the house of Northumberland has continued closely associated with the Lifeboat work. The Seventh Duke, Henry, gave money to endow the Duke of Northumberland Prize, given in the schools of the United Kingdom for the best essay on the Lifeboat service. In reaching the children of the whole country, the Seventh Duke performed a service of as great value as any of his forefathers. Young citizens are brought face to face with realities and their essays shew their quick response to what one competitor calls "the lives of the most sturdy men."<sup>1</sup>

The Eighth Duke, Alan, a Vice-President of the National Institution and President of the Alnwick and Newcastle branch, presented them with the vellum of thanks at Alnwick, and when two of the women were summoned to the annual meeting of the Parent Institution in London, the late Duke and present Duchess, who takes the greatest interest in the Lifeboat Movement,<sup>2</sup> invited them to stay at their house in Prince's Gate and endeavoured to make their first visit to London a memorable one. After the round of visits to the Cenotaph, Houses of Parliament, etc., was concluded, the Duchess asked if there was anything they themselves really wished to see. They replied with one voice, "Harrods," and a blissful morning was spent amongst its glories.

The first public appearance of the present Duke, who will come of age in 1933, was at Boulmer, September 1931, when the new lifeboat was launched.

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix.

<sup>2</sup> The present Duchess is Vice-Patron of the Ladies. From the time she heard of the project to find out the truth about Grace Darling, she has done everything in her power to facilitate the search.

## CHAPTER FORTY-ONE

## THE CREWE TRUSTEES

BAMBURGH CASTLE was purchased by the first Lord Armstrong, great uncle of the present Lord Armstrong, in 1894. The Crewe Trustees had incurred a considerable debt in improving the harbour at North Sunderland and were advised to sell the Castle. The possibility of it passing into hands unsympathetic to the past policy, caused them to seek Lord Armstrong and suggest that he should help them by its purchase. He was interested in its future because of its great historic interest, and also because his nephew, Mr. J. W. Watson of Adderstone, father of the present Lord Armstrong, had family connections with the Castle. He therefore decided to comply with the Trustees' request, and later became chairman of the Crewe Trustees, a post his successor now occupies.

To this day shipwrecked crews can get assistance in the way of money and clothes by applying to the Trustees' Agent at Seahouses, and before the Castle was purchased, suits of clothes were always kept there for them. A gun was fired every quarter of an hour in a fog, an obligation which was taken on by the late Lord Armstrong and carried out until it was rendered unnecessary by the erection of another light-house.

There are five Trustees, Lord Armstrong, chairman, the Bishop of Jarrow, Archdeacon of Durham, vice-chairman, the Archdeacon of Northumberland and Mr. Francis Priestman, and the Rev. R. Watson, rector of Houghton-le-Spring. They still own large estates in Northumberland and Durham, and continue grants made under Lord Crewe's will; the balance of the income left from these payments and the upkeep of the estates goes to the relief of needy clergy and to the payment of pensions to retired clergy of Durham and Northumberland. Over £3,000 was distributed last year.

The castle itself was for some time the residence of Lord Armstrong, but in late years it has been divided into apartments and the beautiful suites of rooms known as the Captain's Lodgings, the King's House, the Keep, the Neville Tower, etc., etc., are let to visitors.

The famous library is still installed in the Keep, with many interesting old pictures, amongst which are portraits of the Sharp family, including one of the famous Trustee, Archdeacon Sharp, and Dr. John Sharp. There is also in the castle a frame of monochrome portraits of Grace Darling, her father and her mother, done by Grace's lover, young Mr. Watson of Newcastle.

The late Lord Armstrong was one of the founders of the Natural History Museum at Newcastle and was President until his death, when the present Lord Armstrong succeeded him for several years, to be followed by Lord Joicey, in his turn succeeded by Lord Grey of Fallodon. The present Lord Armstrong is a Patron.

It will be seen that all these names are connected with Grace Darling, through the gift of the land for her boat, the boat itself and the purchase of the Farnes.

## CHAPTER FORTY-TWO

### HISTORY'S RECORD

A LITTLE pamphlet, *Fuller Citizenship*, by E. M. White, F.R.Hist.S., sums up certain conclusions reached during the collection of these facts about Grace Darling and her fellows.

"Biographies must not be neglected—the lives of ordinary citizens who have served faithfully in their way. . . . The imitation that should be encouraged is that of quiet everyday lives of ordinary people who have, each as their means and talents allowed, made themselves useful to the community. . . . Usefulness is the main characteristic of the effective citizen, and all his interest and knowledge should serve that purpose; he has a sense of devotion, in gratitude for what has been received and in desire to carry on the tradition by doing something for those round us now and for those to follow us."

As ideal citizens, could there be better examples than Grace Darling and her father, or does anyone more perfectly fulfil the demands made in this first sentence in *History the Teacher* by F. J. Gould?

"The aim of education should be service of the family and commonwealth, expressed in material, intellectual, and artistic industry, inspired by history, and perpetually responsive to the claims of the whole circle of humanity."

The study of the lives of the First Dukes of Northumberland shews them to have performed their duties as Peers as satisfactorily as the Darlings executed theirs as light-keepers. Such people meet on common ground. But the reforms of the Second and Fourth Dukes brought about for the benefit of the men they commanded, from sheer love of those they rightly saw as comrades in the Services, remain unchronicled in school histories: all that the Darling family have contributed to the service of Trinity, in devotion and steadfastness and loyalty for four generations, or the Robsons to the Lifeboat movement, passes unnoticed, so that Grace Darling's life and character are unknown to the children of to-day, while History immortalizes an orange vendor because her marketable commodities were not confined to the fruit of her basket, and won the favour of a King.

The extraordinary rise of humanitarianism concurrently with that of our industrial civilization is ignored in favour of the detailed study of the Crusades or Wars of the Roses, and we take the evidence of the gossip-monger of the past as easily as we accept the statements of his prototype to-day. For nearly sixty years Eva Hope's airily unsubstantial

accounts of Grace's home life taken from a work of fiction, have remained unchallenged, and in spite of the detailed history of the Percies used in our schools, Greville's *Memoirs* still sets the popular tune about the Third Duke Hugh. The Darlings and the Northumberlands had the faults of their times and their class, but both families possessed a very large measure of their virtues.

Both families were narrow, set in their ways, their interests centred in their families, their point of view and prejudices iron in consistency and impossible to modify. Grace could not adapt herself to her changed position. Where the girl of to-day faces publicity with courage, sanity and humour, Grace allowed herself to be literally pestered to death. Nor could the Duke and Duchess regard her as anything but a girl in the station of her family, who must continue in it and could not be given the privileges of protection from the multitude which the walls of a castle provide—but the cottage of a poor man, never. Beset by throngs, they left Grace among the crowds.

And yet both families contributed inestimable services to their country and left traditions of duty which their descendants have fulfilled and are fulfilling. From Robert Darling and the Second Duke, Darlings and Northumberlands have been and are able ministrants on behalf of mariners : in their own small way William and Grace Darling took part in the birth of scientific study just as the Third Duke and Duchess did in a large way with their collections, endowments and gifts.

The friendship of the two families in such vastly different stations is unique, but how like they were in their standards and their values !

Grace Darling and her father will be for ever united in history's record, but so must be Grace Darling and her Guardian and his Duchess.

As for Grace, we owe to her deed reforms innumerable for the benefit of all who go down to the sea in ships ; and to her life, a standard of cheerfulness, unselfish love, and content with simple duties faithfully performed. She and her father are akin to " The Unknown Warrior " in that she is typical of the thousands of men and women of their class who live equally devoted lives, happy, hard-working, heroic in hardship and peril, with no desire for praise.

Grace's deed brought her into light but she became, and remains, our National Heroine because she represents the common virtues of humanity.

# APPENDIXES

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## APPENDIX ONE

### I. BAMBURGH

The spelling of Bamburgh varies ; Bamborough, Bambrugh, Balmbro' (used by William Darling) being popular. Bamburgh has been adhered to, as being nearest to "Bamburghshire," the ancient subdivision of Northumberland. Bamburghshire may be deemed conterminous with Bamburgh Ward. The ward includes the old ecclesiastical parishes of Bamburgh (with the chapelry of Belford), Eglingham, Ellingham, Embleton, Howick, Longhoughton, and Lesbury ; in other words, the tract of land stretching from Islandsire in the North to the River Aln upon the South. The shires of Northumberland may be compared to the ridings, hundreds, or wapentakes of southern counties ; and it is clear that the analogy was so far recognised in the Middle Ages that Bamburghshire was termed, with equal propriety, Bamburgh Wapentake.

The possessions of the church of Lindisfarne originally extended into Bamburgh parish as far as the Waren burn, which from its source near Helburn Hill to Warenford formed the southern boundary of the "Terra Lindisfarnensis." Bamburgh parish afterwards encroached upon this territory, and advanced north of the Warren until it included the townships of Ross, Elwick and Detchart.<sup>1</sup>

Bamburgh sent two members to the twenty-third Parliament of King Edward I and in Edward III's time contributed a vessel to the expedition against Calais.

Where the little Waren enters Budle Bay, Warenmouth was once a town of considerable importance and one of the most ancient ports of Northumberland. A charter was granted to the borough by Henry III. It has long been covered by the sea, but in 1838 considerable traces of its seafaring activities existed.

### II. SIGNALS AT BAMBURGH CASTLE AND SEAFARERS' CHARITIES

An account of the signals made use of at Bamburgh Castle,<sup>2</sup> in the County of Northumberland, in case ships or vessels are perceived in distress, and of the charitable institutions established there for their assistance and relief, now published by the direction of the Trustees of Nathaniel late Lord Crewe, with the approbation of the Master, Pilots, and Seamen of the Trinity-house in Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

#### *Signals.*

I. A gun (a nine-pounder) placed at the bottom of the tower, to be fired as a signal in case any ship or vessel be observed in distress, viz. *once*, when any ship or vessel is stranded or wrecked upon the islands, or any adjacent rock ; *twice*, when, etc., behind the castle, or to the northward of it ; *thrice* (ditto), to the southward of the castle ; in order that the customs house officers, and the tenants with their servants, may hasten to give all possible assistance—as well as to prevent the wreck from being plundered.

II. In every great storm two men on horseback are sent from the castle to

<sup>1</sup> *History of Northumberland*, by E. Bateson, B.A.

<sup>2</sup> *View of Northumberland*, by Hutchinson.



patrol along the coast, from sunset to sunrise, that, in case of an accident, one may remain by the ship, and other return to alarm the castle. Whoever brings the first notice of any ship or vessel being in distress, is intitled to a premium, in proportion to the distance from the castle ; and if between 12<sup>00</sup> at night and 3<sup>00</sup> in the morn<sup>g</sup>. the premium to be doubled.

III. A large flag is hoisted, when there is any ship or vessel seen in distress upon the Fern Islands, or Staples, that the sufferers may have the satisfaction of knowing their distress is perceived from the shore, and that relief will be sent them as soon as possible. In case of bad weather the flag will be kept up, a gun fired morning and evening, and a rocket thrown up every night from the north turret, till such time as relief can be sent. These are also signals to the Holy Island fishermen, who by the advantage of their situation, can put off for the islands at times when no boat from the mainland can get over the breakers. Premiums are given to the first boats that put off for the Is<sup>ls</sup> to give their assistance to s. or v. in distress, and provisions and liquors are sent in the boats.

IV. A bell on the 4th turret will be rung out in every thick fog, as a signal to the fishing boats ; and a large swivel fixed on the east turret will be fired every 15 mins. as a signal to the ships without the islands.

V. A large weather-cock is fixed on the top of the flagstaff, for the use of the pilots.

VI. A large speaking-trumpet is provided, to be used when ships are in distress near the shore, or are run aground.

VII. An observatory or watch tower is made on the east turret of the castle, where a person is to attend every morning at daybreak during the winter season to look out if any ships be in distress.

VIII. Masters and Commanders of ships or v. in distress, are desired to make such signals as are usually made by people in their melancholy situation.

*Assistance, Stores, and Provisions, prepared at Bam. Castle for seamen, ships or v. wrecked or driven ashore on that coast or neighbourhood.*

I. Rooms and beds are prepared for seamen, ship-wrecked, who will be maintained in the castle for a week (or longer accordg. to circum<sup>s</sup>) and during that time be found with all manner of necessities.

II. Cellars for wine and other liquors from ship-wrecked vessels, in wh. they are to be deposited for one year, in order to be claimed by the proper owners.

III. A store-house ready for the reception of wrecked goods, cables, rigging and iron. A book is kept for entering all kinds of timber and other wrecked goods, giving the marks and description of each, with the date when they came on shore.

IV. Four pair of screws for raising ships that are stranded, in order to their being repaired, timber, blocks and tackles, handspokes, cables, ropes, pumps and iron, ready for the use of ship-w<sup>d</sup> vessels.

N.B. But if taken away, to be paid for at prime cost.

V. A pair of chains with large rings and swivels, made on purpose for weighing ships (of 1000 tons) that are sunk upon rocks, or in deep water.

N.B. These chains are to be lent (gratis) to any person having occasion for them, within 40 or 50 miles along the coast, on giving proper security to re-deliver them to the Trustees.

VI. Two mooring chains of different lengths are provided, wh. may occasionally be joined together ; when a greater length is required.

VII. Whenever any dead bodies are cast on shore, coffins &c. will be provided, gratis, and also the funeral expenses paid.

Dec. 24. 1771.

Trinity House, Newcastle-upon-Tyne. We the Master, &c. of this house desire the Trustees to make their humane intention public.

THOMAS AUBONE, Sec.

### III. DEED FROM THE CHARITIES OF NATHANIEL LORD CREWE, BISHOP OF DURHAM AND DR JOHN SHARPE

#### AIDS TO SHIPS CREWS, &c., IN DISTRESS

Since the Report of the Commissioners of Inquiry a Light House has been erected on the Farne Islands. The number of wrecks on the coast has been greatly reduced in consequence and the importance of the Castle as a station for the assistance of Ships and Mariners in distress has declined if indeed it has not always been greatly over estimated.

The expenditure under this head for 10 years has been as follows :

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Life Boat and Subscription to the Life Boat Institution . . . . .	455	16	0			
Rewards to the Crew . . . . .	39	2	11			
				494	18	11
Repair of the Fog Gun . . . . .	28	13	8			
Ammunition . . . . .	135	13	11			
Firing . . . . .	26	13	0			
				191	0	7
Signal Flags . . . . .	7	7	6			
Rocketts . . . . .	12	16	7			
				20	4	1
Patrol of the Coast . . . . .				40	8	0
Refreshments for Distressed Seamen . . . . .	107	17	5			
Medical Relief for Ditto. . . . .	7	14	0			
Casual Relief . . . . .	9	16	4			
Funerals . . . . .	3	2	3			
				128	10	0
Castle Coble . . . . .	4	13	0			
Subscription to Meterological Statn. . . . .	5	0	0			
Sundries . . . . .		6	0			
				9	19	0
				885	0	7

## APPENDIX TWO

### I. TRINITY HOUSE

The Corporation of Trinity House or accord<sup>d</sup> to its original Charter, "The Master Wardens and assistants of the Guild Fraternity or Brotherhood of the most glorious and undivided Trinity and of St. Clement, in the Parish of Deptford Stroud, in the county of Kent," existed in the reign of Henry VII as a religious house with certain duties connected with pilotage and was incorporated during the reign of Henry VIII. In 1565 it was given certain rights to maintain beacons, etc., but not until 1680 did it own any lighthouses. Since that date it has gradually purchased most of the ancient privately owned lighthouses and has erected many new ones.<sup>1</sup> Gradually it became the "recognised official

<sup>1</sup> *Encyclopædia Britannica.*

lighting authority in this country, and in return for its expert services, it collected from mariners various dues, such as pilotage, lastage, loadmarage, beaconage and buoyage. By the commencement of the nineteenth century, these payments had become merged into their present form of Light Dues.

Under the Mastership of Pepys, Trinity House had attempted to obtain powers for the compulsory purchase of all the then existing lights, but in view of its past illiberal policy Parliament had not sufficient confidence in the Board to acquiesce in the proposal. But as time went on a wiser action was adopted, and the inquiry into the management of lights held in 1822, led to the passing two years later of an Act empowering the Corporation to acquire seamarks from public bodies or private owners, to levy such dues as might be approved by the King in council, and to draw on the annual income of the Corporation up to £7000 for the payment of the Elder Brethren in lieu of the remuneration they had hitherto received, called "Elder Turns."<sup>1</sup>

The Act of 1836 gave the Corporation control of English Coast lights with certain supervisory powers over the numerous local lighting authorities, including the Irish and Scottish Boards.

The Corporation now consists of a Master, Deputy-Master, and 22 Elder Brethren (10 of whom are honorary), together with an unlimited number of Younger Brethren who, however, perform no executive duties.<sup>2</sup>

## II. LLOYD'S

Lloyd's began as a gathering of merchants at Lloyd's Coffee-house in Tower Street, London, somewhere about 1688. Then it moved to Lombard Street in 1692, in the territory of merchants of the highest class, and a weekly newspaper furnishing commercial and shipping news was started, the precursor of *Lloyd's List*, the oldest existing newspaper, with the exception of the *London Gazette*, existing to-day.

But marine insurance grew and finally the underwriters and brokers settled in the Royal Exchange in 1774.

The association was reorganised in 1811, by which time a uniform printed policy was in force.

Grace Darling lived in the time when Lloyd's was beginning to develop into the mighty organisation it has now become, but not till 1871 did an Act give all the rights and privileges of a corporation under parliamentary sanction. According to this Act the three great objects were (and are), 1st, the carrying out of the business of marine insurance; 2nd, the protection of the interests of the members of the Corporation, and 3rd, the collection, publication, and diffusion of intelligence and information with respect to shipping.

## III. EARLIEST PRINTED POLICY EXISTENT

"This is to certify to all whom it may concern that the Committee for managing the affairs of Lloyd's have, in conformity with the powers vested in them, appointed *Mr Bartholomew Younghusband* to act as Agents for the Subscribers to Lloyd's at BAMBURGH AND FOR THE COAST OF THE CUSTOMHOUSE DISTRICT INCLUDING HOLY ISLAND.

### *Intelligence.*

The Agent is to furnish prompt and regular advice of the arrival and sailing of Vessels; of accidents or other circumstances of danger or distress that may

<sup>1</sup> *British Lighthouses*. J. Saxby Wryde. Fisher Unwin.

<sup>2</sup> *Encyclopædia Britannica*.

occur ; of the appearance of Enemy's Cruisers or Privateers ; and generally such information as may be of importance to the Subscribers to Lloyd's.

*Ships Driven on Shore or in Distress.*

When Vessels are in distress, or are driven on shore, in the neighbourhood of the Port where the Agent resides, he is to offer to the Master such services as the nature of the case may require ; and in cases of Shipwreck, where neither the Owners of the Vessel, or Goods, nor their Representatives, are on the spot the Agent is to take such steps as he may deem best for the preservation of the property, giving immediate advice of the circumstances to the Assured, and following their instructions in all cases where he can obtain them. Where Salvage or Renumeration is claimed for assistance rendered to Vessels, it is proper for the Agent to attend the Meetings of the Commissioners, Magistrates, or other persons legally authorised to determine the amount, in order to rebut any exaggerated statement on the part of the Salvors by the evidence of the Master and Crew. He will also observe that in case of Shipwreck, unless Freight be earned, neither proceeds of Ship or Goods saved are liable to the payment of the Seamen's wages.

*Repairs of Vessels.*

The Agent will see that intelligent Professional Men are appointed as Surveyors, and that in their survey and estimates they distinguish as far as possible between the damage sustained during the Voyage on which the Vessel is actually engaged, and the damages or defects existing prior thereto, and which are chargeable to the Owners. . . . When attempts are made to condemn ships as unseaworthy, that have sustained damage, the Agent is to use every means in his power to prevent such condemnation—if it is evident that the Vessel may be repaired so as to enable her to prosecute her voyage. And in case she cannot be repaired so as to proceed, and her condemnation becomes unavoidable, it will then be his duty carefully to investigate whether the condemnation is occasioned by any natural defect or decay.

LONDON, *March 30th*, 1825.

IV. ADVERTISEMENT SHOWING CHANGE OF BAMBURGH FROM A HEAD TO A SUB-AGENCY

JAMES SINCLAIR

Marine Fire and Life Assurance Agent

Royal Prussian Vice-Consul

and

AGENT FOR LLOYDS

also for

Scotch, English, and Foreign Clubs.

Insurance Companies, Owners, and others having vessels wrecked or disabled in James Sinclair's district which includes St Abbs Head, Eyemouth, Burnmouth, Berwick on Tweed, Goswick, Holy Island, Waren, Bamburgh, North Sunderland, Beadnell, Newton, and the Fern Islands, can have the same attended to at any of these places by writing to Mr Sinclair at Berwick, he having agents at each of the above places.

BERWICK UPON TWEED, *9th May*, 1843.

Lloyd's Agents Offices.

This appeared in *The Memoir of Grace Darling*, published at the office of the *Berwick and Kelso Warder*, 1843.

## APPENDIX THREE

## I. NAVIGATION BY STEAM

In the conquest of water and its use in methods of communication, America and Great Britain have been closely united from the beginning.

John Fitch (1743-1798), born at Windsor, Connecticut, claimed to be the inventor of steam-navigation, but this was disputed by James Rumsey in Virginia, and eventually Fitch obtained exclusive rights in steam-transport in New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Delaware, while Rumsey was granted a like privilege in Virginia, Maryland, and New York. A steamboat built by Fitch plied for hire on the Delaware in 1790, but he lost money and the company was dissolved.

The first really successful marine engine was made in Edinburgh by William Symington in 1788, and employed to drive two central paddle-wheels in a pleasure-boat on Dalswinton Loch. His steam-tug *Charlotte Dundas* was tried in the Forth and Clyde Canal in 1802 and was entirely successful, but it was feared that steam towing and propelling would injure the banks of the canal and the project was abandoned.

Robert Fulton (1765-1815), an American engineer, born in Little Britain, Pennsylvania, visited England in 1787 and saw the *Charlotte Dundas*. He had conceived the idea of steam-propulsion in 1793, but had not put his views into practice. He returned to America in 1806. In 1807, the *Clermont* was built for Fulton and plied successfully upon the Hudson. The engine was, however, made by the English firm of Boulton and Watt.

William Symington seems to be the first inventor who really achieved a practical marine engine. *The Comet* was the first steam vessel to ply regularly and successfully; she travelled between Glasgow and Greenock at about five miles an hour.

The year 1838 saw the momentous crossing of the Atlantic Ocean by the *Sirius* and *Great Western*, and the beginning of the regular Atlantic passage at 8 or 9 knots per hour.

## II. RAILWAYS

The first railroad was authorised by Parliament in 1821, animal power was first proposed! By the advice of George Stephenson, its engineer, however, steam-engines were tried, and on September 27th, 1825, a train of thirty-four carriages was drawn by an engine with a signalman on horseback ahead. The train attained a speed of fifteen miles an hour and was intended to convey minerals and goods, but from the start passengers insisted on being carried, and on October 10th, 1825, a daily coach, "The Experiment," was put on carrying six inside and from fifteen to 20 outside, travelling from Darlington to Stockton and back in two hours. So great was the success of the new method of transport that the price of coals at Darlington fell from 18s. to 8s. 6d. per ton.

The Monklands railway in Scotland was opened in 1826, but the Liverpool and Manchester railway (1830) first made the nation realise that a revolution in transport had occurred. In 1829 the "Rocket" engine, made by George and Robert Stephenson, won the prize offered by the Directors, and the modern locomotive was established.

In the next ten years 2000 miles of railways were authorised by Parliament and by 1838 the country was busy with surveyors, although a network of railways had not actually come into being. 1840-1850 saw the railway boom. Grace Darling died as steam was beginning to cloud the land as it had begun to cloud the sea.

From the earliest days of railways Parliament had laid upon the Board of Trade the onus of protecting those who used the railways, and thanks no doubt to the general agitation for the inspection of Steam Vessels, a Regulation of Railways Act was passed in 1842, insisting on the inspection of the line before the opening of the Railway could take place.

### III. PHOTOGRAPHY

While the Swedish chemist, Scheele, first investigated the darkening action of light on silver chloride, England first produced a photograph as the result of Scheele's observations.

In June 1802, Wedgwood published a paper in *The Journal of the Royal Institution* on using prepared paper by throwing shadows on it, but he could not fix his prints.

The first to found a process of photography which gave a picture subsequently unaffected by light, was Nicephore de Niepce who began his researches as early as 1814, but it was not till 1827 he had success. The process was secret : he communicated it to Daguerre on December 5th, 1829, and in 1833, when Niepce died, his son Isidore made a new agreement with Daguerre to continue their researches. The origin of the daguerreotype is plainly due to the elder Niepce, and this was acknowledged at the time, when on publication of the process, life-pensions of 6000 francs and 4000 francs were bestowed on Daguerre and Niepce.

The publication of the process (6th Feb. 1839) was made subsequently to that of the Talbot-type process (26th Jan. 1839).

The first camera made in England was made in 1839, by Mr. Palmer of London, on the plan of Mr. Fry.

The exposure required for a photo of a landscape was from seven to eight hours, but single objects strongly lighted by the sun could be taken in about three hours.

Some thirty years elapsed before photography became general.

Photographs exist of old Darling and his children, William, Thomasin, Robert, George Alexander and William Brooks, but these were taken twenty years or so after Grace's death.

### APPENDIX FOUR

#### I. LETTER FROM STEPHEN REED, ESQ., CORONER, NEWCASTLE, TO LORD JOHN RUSSELL

NEWCASTLE, 15th Sept., 1838.

MY LORD,

As an officer of the Crown, I think it my duty to report to you the result of an inquest holden on four bodies wrecked on the coast of Northumberland, in the *Forfarshire* steam-boat on the 7th instant.

Of about fifty persons on board this unfortunate vessel, it does not appear that more than eighteen have been saved ; nine from the wreck, and nine others who took to the boat, previously to the vessel drifting on the rocks at the Fern Islands. There is every reason to believe the boilers of the vessel, when she sailed from Hull, were in a very defective and insufficient state ; which has led to one of the most melancholy and distressing events that has taken place on the Northumberland coast for many years. Of course, I can speak to nothing further than what came out on the examination of the witnesses before me ; but there is sufficient to show that the boilers were imperfect, and the captain obstinate

and careless of the lives of his passengers and crew, in continuing the voyage after the boilers had given way. There is strong presumptive evidence, that at the time of sailing the Captain was aware of the insufficiency of the boilers ; as they had just undergone a partial repair to carry them to Dundee, when it was intended either immediately to renew the boilers, or lay the vessel up till the spring.<sup>1</sup> The reason, it is supposed, that induced the captain to proceed, was the fact of his having his wife on board, whom he preferred taking home by the boat, rather than be at the expense of taking her by land. It is said, that when the boilers first gave way, the passengers remonstrated, and wished the Captain to return to port, but he obstinately declined doing so ; this, however, there is no evidence of.

Partial accidents from the explosion of steam-boilers are constantly taking place ; and only last week a steam-boiler of one of the Newcastle and Shields boats burst, and occasioned the death of two individuals. These accidents are of so fearful a nature and so constantly occurring that it becomes necessary the Government should be apprised of them, in order to institute inquiries, that may lead to some measure which may be calculated to render steam-boat navigation more safe to the community, and prevent the occurrence of calamities of such extended and fearful a nature. Whether it may be by the appointment of experienced engineers as inspectors of steam-boats, at the port from whence they sail, or any other, the wisdom of Parliament may judge proper ; but surely the time is now come, when the country may fairly call upon the interference of the Legislature.

I may, perhaps, be excused for saying, that companies should, at their own expence, pay the salaries of such appointed officers, who might be under the control of the Board of Customs, and each boat be bound to give bond according to its tonnage, for proportionable contribution towards the salary of the officer at the port.

With these remarks I close my letter ; I transmit a copy of the examination, and the verdict of the jury ; which marks their sense of the matter I have taken the liberty to bring before your notice.

I have, etc.

S. REED, *Coroner.*

Right Honourable Lord John Russell.

## II. REPORT OF PUBLIC MEETING HELD AT NEWCASTLE

At a Public Meeting of the Inhabitants of this Town, held in the Guildhall, on Monday the 24th inst., for the purpose of considering the propriety of presenting an address to her Majesty, praying that immediate measures might be taken for causing steam-boats employed in carrying passengers from the several ports in this kingdom, to undergo from time to time such survey and examination as may tend to ensure the safety of her Majesty's subjects who may be conveyed therein ; and for taking into consideration the meritorious conduct of Darling and his daughter, in risking their lives to save the persons who were thrown on the rocks at the Fern Islands from the *Forfarshire* steam boat, with a view of procuring them some pecuniary reward.

(The Right Worshipful Mayor in the Chair).

It was unanimously resolved,

<sup>1</sup> This, and the following paragraph, is entirely untrue. The date of this letter shews it was written after the First Inquest, before the further evidence was received. Unfortunately, this letter was docketed and subsequently accepted as *prima facie* evidence.

Moved by Mr Ald. Ridley, and seconded by Joseph Watson Esq.,

1. That this meeting sincerely accords with the general feeling of sorrow for the recent loss of the *Forfarshire* steam-boat on the coast of Northumberland, and it cannot but express a fear that the melancholy disaster was in some measure to be attributed to a fault or deficiency in the machinery or vessel.

Moved by Wm Loraine Esq., seconded by Captain Palmer,

2. That this meeting, contemplating the great use of steam navigation throughout the British dominions, and the probability of a vast and rapid extension of the same, considers it is the imperative duty of the government to provide, as far as it is possible, against the increased dangers to which the public must consequently become exposed in travelling by means, the state of which it is impossible for individual passengers to examine.

Moved by Matthew Plummer Esq., seconded by Wm Henry Brockett Esq.,

3. That it is the opinion of this meeting that one of the best modes of providing for the safety of steam-boat passengers would be to have duly qualified persons appointed by the crown, or the legislative authorities, as inspectors in every port in her Majesties dominions where steam-boats are used, whose duty it shall be to survey these vessels, in order to ascertain their state, with regard to general sea-worthiness, power, and repair of the machinery, and the sufficiency of the equipments ; and who shall be empowered to grant licenses or certificates, stating their opinion thereof, as well as of the efficiency of every vessel for the performance of the voyage or trade it is intended to be or is employed in ; a copy of which certificate, duly authenticated shall be placed in some conspicuous part of the steam vessel to which it refers, and also in the office or offices of the agents of such vessel at the places it may trade to, for the information and satisfaction of the public.

Moved by George Straker Esq., and seconded by Stephen Lowrey Esq.,

4. That as the best machinery may occasionally go wrong, it is necessary that all sea-going steam-vessels should be provided with strong and powerful windlasses, and cables of length and strength sufficient, to enable them, when driven on a lee shore, to ride with perfect safety in the strongest gales and the heaviest seas.

Moved by the Rev. Wm Hawks, seconded by Mr George Straker,

5. That the memorial to the Queen now read, praying Her Most Gracious Majesty would be pleased to adopt measures for the appointment of such inspectors, be adopted ; and that after having received signature, it may be forwarded by the Mayor of Newcastle to the Secretary of State for the Home Department, to be laid by him before Her Majesty.

Moved by the Master of Trinity House, seconded by Mr Jas. Reid,

6. That a copy of the petition be sent to the Secretary of State for the Home Department, and that the members of the town, Wm Ord Esq., and John H. Hind Esq., be requested to press the subject of the petition on the attention of the government.

Moved by John Brandling Esq., seconded by Mr Ald. Ridley,

7. That a subscription be entered into for the purpose of offering a testimony of admiration of the magnanimous and disinterested conduct of Darling and his daughter, in rescuing from their perilous situation on the rock on which the vessel struck, a portion of the crew and passengers of the *Forfarshire* steam-boat, and also for the purpose of rewarding the men who went off in a boat from North Sunderland to the wreck at the great risk of their lives.



Moved by R. Plummer Esq., seconded by John Jobling Esq.,

8. That John Spedding Esq be appointed treasurer to the subscribers ; and that a Committee, consisting of the Mayor, the Master of Trinity House, Mr Brandling, Mr Plummer, Mr Joshua Watson, Mr Straker, Mr John Jobling, Rev. Wm Hawks, Mr Stanneforth, secretary, be appointed to take measures to forward the subscription, to enquire into all the circumstances of the case, and to report thereon to a future meeting of the subscribers, which will be called for the purpose of appropriating the funds subscribed.

The Memorial will be at the Exchange, the various News' Rooms, and at the shops of the principal Booksellers. The Subscription List will be at the several Banks of this town.<sup>1</sup>

### III. COPY OF THE PETITION TO THE QUEEN

To the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty in Council.

The humble petition of the Gentry, Merchants, Bankers, Ship Owners, Traders, and other Inhabitants, of the town and county of Newcastle upon Tyne and its vicinity,

Humbly sheweth,

That your petitioners have viewed with much concern the serious accidents which have occurred in vessels propelled by steam, and by which the lives of numbers of their fellow subjects have been lost.

That your petitioners conceive that if these disasters cannot be altogether prevented, they may, in a better degree, be guarded against, and so decreased, by subjecting steam-vessels which carry passengers to the survey or inspection of persons duly appointed and properly qualified ; whose duty it shall be to examine not only into the state of the hull of the vessel, and of the repair and competency of the machinery, boilers etc., but also into the sufficiency of the equipment of the same.

Wherefore your petitioners earnestly desire that your Majesty would be graciously pleased, with as little delay as possible, to adopt measures for the appointment of such inspectors in every port of your Majesty's dominions where steam-boats are used ; your petitioners confidently anticipating the cheerful acquiescence of your Majesty's subjects in such measures as your Majesty shall be pleased to adopt until the meeting of parliament shall give the opportunity of making such legislative provision on the subject as may be deemed necessary.

And your petitioners humbly pray that the inspectors should be empowered to grant licenses or certificates to the captain, commander, owner and agents of the vessel, when it is deemed by them to be in good and sufficient order, and suitably equipped, and in a fit condition for the voyage or trade on which it is entering, or in which it is engaged ; and that one at least of such certificates shall be placed in some conspicuous part of the steam-vessel to which it refers, and one at each of the offices of the agents thereof.

And your petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE, *September, 1838.*<sup>2</sup>

### IV. AMERICAN SHIPPING LAWS<sup>3</sup>

"The very numerous occurrences of late by which multitudes of our fellow men have been placed in imminent peril, and by which many have been precipitated to destruction either by explosion or shipwreck, certainly present a

<sup>1</sup> *Tyne Mercury*, September 25th, 1838.

<sup>2</sup> *Tyne Mercury*, September 25th, 1838.

<sup>3</sup> Editorial, *Berwick Advertiser*, September 28th 1839.

call . . . for the interference of Government in appointing a qualified and authorised inspector of Steam Vessels, as well as appointing and enforcing a sufficient code of regulations for their equipment and management. . . . We conceive that two or three inspecting engineers should be appointed, to make periodical visits to every port from whence Steam Vessels depart, to pronounce on their condition in their hull and rigging, their engines, their boilers, and their boats ; that these officers give a certificate of the condition or seaworthiness of the vessel in all these respects every three, six, or twelve months, and that no vessel be allowed to ply on any station without their certificate. It will further be requisite that an officer of each great port should have a certain charge, with power to report or stop a vessel from proceeding if he had reason to suspect deficiency in any part, or if he saw a greater number of passengers on board than the vessel could accommodate in case of danger ; or than the number which, like a Stage Coach, she might be licensed to carry.

The American Legislature has been convinced of the necessity of interference, and have passed an act of which the following is the substance of the different Sections.

1. A fresh enrolment of steam boats.
2. Imposes a fine of 500 dollars for navigating them without license.
3. Appoints inspectors on all navigable waters.
4. Directs the inspectors to examine and report on boats, and to give tickets of their sufficiency.
5. Directs duplicate reports of all particulars of the vessel and machinery to be made, one to be posted up in the vessel.
6. Directors' licenses to be renewed every twelve months, under penalty of 500 dollars, and efficient crews to be kept on board.
7. Directs, under penalty of 200 dollars, that whenever the engine is stopped, the safety valve shall be liberated to keep down the steam below the certified strength of the boilers.
8. Directs boats of certain specified proportions, under a like penalty, to be kept on board each vessel.
9. Directs, under a penalty of 300 dollars, fire engine and leather hose to be kept on board each vessel, and iron chains to be used instead of tiller ropes.
10. Directs, under penalty, signal lights to be hoisted at night, when under way.
11. Gives jurisdictions to courts.
12. Declares fatal negligence or misconduct to be manslaughter, punishable with ten years' imprisonment and hard labour.
13. Declares, in all actions for injuries from bursting or collapse it shall be sufficient for plaintiff to prove the fact of the cause of the loss, and the onus of proving it not to have been the result of negligence shall rest on the owner.

We do not insist for an exact copy of the American Act in all its provisions, and we conceive it deficient especially in not restricting the number of passengers : but something of the kind we *must* have and the sooner the better. Vessels will be leaving Liverpool and Glasgow soon with Irish reapers, crowded to such a degree that an inch of standing room will not be to spare, and the least misfortune in regard of weather or sea or machinery must prove fatal perhaps to hundreds.

*The Meeting at Newcastle.* While we were writing the above, the inhabitants of Newcastle were in public meeting discussing upon the subject, and we have much pleasure in referring to the report and resolutions of the meeting. These

resolutions, however, and the views of the speakers, seem to point to only *one* inspector ; we conceive there ought to be at least *three* to go in circuit. Mr Hodgson Hinde indeed speaks of a number, but we beg to opine that we should scarcely think of looking among our half-pay naval officers for *many* or even for any qualified for this charge. A practical engineer and a practical shipbuilder are the men we would choose. The communication from the Coroner before whom the inquest on the sufferers by the *Forfarshire* was held, stating that Government is likely to take up the subject, must give general satisfaction ; but it ought also to urge public bodies to press the subject, and to endeavour to direct it by proper suggestion that it will be done in a manner which will prove effectual, without subjecting the owners of steamships to more trouble than necessity demands."

#### V. INVESTIGATION

We understand that Mr Sheriff Henderson, in consequence of an order emanating from Lord John Russell, her Majesty's Secretary of State for the Home Department, transmitted through the Lord Advocate (Mr Murray), is engaged in making an investigation into the state of the steam-ship *Forfarshire* for some time previous to the lamented shipwreck.<sup>1</sup>

#### VI. LETTER FROM THE HON. FOX MAULE

The following letter has been received by the Lord Provost of Glasgow from the Hon. Fox Maule, Under Secretary of State.

WHITEHALL, *November 2, 1838.*

MY LORD,

I am directed by Lord John Russell to acknowledge the receipt of your lordship's letter of the 26th of October, forwarding a memorial from the parliamentary trustees for improving the navigation of the river Clyde, and enlarging the harbour of Glasgow ; and I am to inform your lordship that recent accidents to steam boats have been viewed with much concern by Lord John Russell and he will carefully consider what measures are best calculated to prevent a recurrence of such calamities.

I have the honour to be, my lord,  
Your lordship's obedient servant,

The Lord Provost of Glasgow.<sup>2</sup>

F. MAULE.

#### VII. STEAM VESSEL QUESTIONNAIRE

"We are glad to learn that Government is instituting an inquiry into the cause of accidents on board steam vessels, with a view of requiring by law such provisions for the safety of the vessels and passengers, and such a superintendence, as may diminish the number of fatal accidents arising from explosions. The following Queries have been addressed to a number of persons throughout the country, supposed to be competent to give information ; and if any of our readers are able to volunteer evidence on the subject, we are sure it will be gladly received.

*January, 1839.*

SIR,

The accompanying letter will inform you of the objects of an inquiry entrusted to us by her Majesty's government.

In furtherance thereof, we beg to ask your attention to the annexed queries, and to request your answer to such of these as come within your knowledge ;

<sup>1</sup> *Sunderland Beacon*, November 7th, 1838.

<sup>2</sup> *Berwick and Kelso Warder*, November 17th, 1838.

also, to make any suggestions which you may consider relevant to the subject. We are anxious to have your reply by the end of this month, enclosed as under.

We have the honour to be, sir,

Your most obedient servant,

J. W. PRINGLE.

Steam Vessel Enquiry.—To the Right Honourable the President of the Board of Trade, etc., London.

### *Queries.*

1. What accidents, occasioning loss of life or property, in steam vessels, you may be personally acquainted with, which have happened at sea or in rivers, during the last few years ; ordinary casualties, common to all vessels, not included ?
2. Whether any accidents have occurred in steam vessels, from explosions, or the collapse of boilers, of your own construction ; and to what causes you attribute them ?
3. The nature and cause of any accidents with which you are acquainted, arising from the explosion, collapsing, or rending of boilers, *not* of your own construction.
4. The causes of the loss of any steamers at sea, or in rivers, within your knowledge, which have not been occasioned by defective machinery.
5. Are the engines and boilers of steamers, in your opinion, overhauled and repaired as frequently as is requisite to maintain them in a safe working state, both as regards the boilers and effective power of the engines ?
6. Are you able to suggest any improvement in the safety-valves feed, blowing-off, or other apparatus of the boilers, or in the management thereof, which would give additional security to them against explosions, and other injuries to which they are liable ?
7. Do you consider the outfit of mercantile steamers, generally, as regards the equipment of sails and number of boats on board, sufficient for the preservation of the vessels, crews, and passengers in the event of the engines from any cause ceasing to work ?
8. Are the regulations and signals established in the port of . . . effective or defective, for the prevention of collision between steamers and other craft.
9. Your observations are invited on accidents from fire peculiar to steam vessels, whether arising from the spontaneous ignition of coal, the smoke joints of boilers, or other causes ; together with your opinion on the best mode of counteracting dangers from these sources.
10. You are also requested to offer any suggestions for regulations, or other practical measures, which may tend to give additional security to persons and property on board steam vessels."<sup>1</sup>

### VIII. QUESTIONS IN PARLIAMENT

"It will be seen from our report of the proceedings of parliament, that our worthy representative Mr Hodgson, has interested himself in this subject, so important to the public at large, and having a melancholy connection with this borough from the fact of two steamers having been lost, within sight of its walls, at an interval of only two or three weeks from each other, and both of which calamities, there is every reason to believe, might have been prevented, had some such regulations been in force as those which the Honourable member seeks to have provided. Mr Hodgson put his question to the Secretary of State for the

<sup>1</sup> *Berwick Advertiser*, February 2nd, 1839.

Home Department—wishing to know if the government were prepared to lay any measure before parliament calculated to prevent or diminish the occurrence of accidents in steam-navigation ; but Lord John Russell referred the question to the President of the Board of Trade, who replied that competent persons had been employed by government to investigate the subject, and make their report upon it ; that the report was expected shortly, when it should be laid before parliament, and he trusted he should be able to found upon it a bill, having the effect desired by the Honourable member for Berwick."<sup>1</sup>

## IX. ACCOUNTS AND PAPERS (1839)

### *Contents of Report*

Abstract of Schedule of Accidents.

Particular Instances of Accidents.

Of Wrecks, Foundering, and Imminent Peril : *Forfarshire, Northern Yacht, Killarney, Aurora, Abby, Frolic, Rothsay Castle, Erin, Superb, Ardincaple.*

Of Explosions :

Table of Explosions }

Effects of Explosions }

Safety Valves ; Water or Boilers ; Quality of Material.

Of Fires.

Of Collisions, Night Signals, etc.

Of Boilers and Engines.

Summary of Accidents since 1838.

„ causes of Accidents.

Amount of Mercantile Steam Marine.

Table of Tonnage, Steam-power, etc.

Opinions of Correspondents—reviewed.

Ship-builders.

Lloyd's surveyors.

Steam-vessel owners.

Engineers.

Harbour Masters.

Coroners.

Officers of the R.N., and Commanders of Steamers. }

Summary of measures recommended.

Dimensions of Five Ocean Steam-ships.

Of Lloyd's Register of British and Foreign Shipping.

Outline of proposed Legislative Regulations.

Abstract of the Laws and Regulations of America, covering steam-vessels.

Abstract of the Laws and Regulations of Holland, Belgium, covering steam-vessels.

Abstract of the Laws and Regulations of France, covering steam-vessels.

Schedule of 92 ascertained Accidents, with their causes.

Appendix.

Custom-house return, 1838.

Accidents on the Thames.

Digest of accidents on the Thames.

Case of the *Earl Grey*.

„ *Forfarshire*.

„ *Aurora*.

„ *Tweedside*.

„ *Ardincaple*.

Explosion.

Wreck.

Imminent Peril.

Fire.

Partial Wreck.

<sup>1</sup> *Berwick and Kelso Warder*, February 16th, 1839.

Case of the <i>Hercules</i> .	Explosion.
<i>Northern Yacht.</i>	Foundering.
<i>James Gallacher.</i>	Explosion.
<i>Royal William and Tagus.</i> }	Collisions.
<i>Thames and Shannon.</i> }	
<i>Suffolk.</i>	Spontaneous Ignition of Coal.
<i>Erin and Killarney.</i>	Foundering.
<i>Morning Star.</i>	Explosion.
Communications.	

## APPENDIX FIVE

## I. LIFE-BOATS

The first Englishman to devote himself to the idea of constructing a boat of special buoyancy and stability, was a London coachbuilder, Lionel Lukin by name, and as early as 1784 he converted a Norway yawl into what he called an "unimmergible boat." Although his aim was not the construction of a boat for life-saving but the making of all boats safer, he was, in fact, associated with the very first attempt to establish a Life-boat Station on our coasts. In 1786 he converted a coble into an "unimmergible" boat for Bamburgh, on the Northumbrian Coast, where, for several years, she was used for rescuing lives from shipwreck.

*The first Life-boat.*

Then in 1789, independently of Lukin's efforts, the first boat to be built for the express purpose of a Life-boat and to be so called, was launched at South Shields. Her name was *The Original*, and she represented a combination of the plans, models, and suggestions of a number of inventors, submitted in response to an advertisement inserted in the *Newcastle Courant* by a local association known by the name of "The Gentlemen of the Lawe House." This advertisement offered a prize of two guineas for a plan or model of a boat capable of riding the stormy seas at the mouth of the Tyne. "The Gentlemen of the Lawe House" used to meet in a building on a hill called the Lawe. Their reading-room overlooked the entrance to the Tyne, and from it they must have witnessed many dreadful wrecks, including—on the 15th of March, 1789—that of the *Adventure*, whose crew dropped off the rigging one by one and perished in the sight of thousands of helpless spectators. The next month the Lawe House Association submitted to the Brethren of the Newcastle Trinity House a proposal to station a boat permanently at the mouth of the river for the saving of the ship-wrecked, and to put up beacons for the guidance of mariners. They further appointed a committee to tabulate what they regarded as the essential characteristics of a Life-boat, and issued the advertisement.

*William Wouldhave's Discovery.*

Not wholly satisfied with any of the entries the committee thought well enough of the model submitted by William Wouldhave, a house-painter and a teacher of singing, to offer him half of the premium. In this model Wouldhave embodied his great discovery, the self-righting principle. This principle was not adopted until over sixty years later, but Wouldhave's model formed the basis of the design of *The Original*.

*Henry Greathead's Life-boats.*

A share of the honours due to all who had a hand in its construction, and in the establishment of the first permanent Life-boat Station on our shores, belongs to

Mr. Nicholas Fairles, chairman of the Lawe House committee, and Mr. Rockwood, a member of it, for these two, revolving in their minds the ideas of Would-have and other competitors, modelled from them in clay the actual design to which *The Original* was built, after the adoption of a suggestion by Henry Greathead, her builder, that her keel should be curved or "rockered." Remaining in commission until 1830, when she was dashed on the rocks and broken in two, *The Original* saved the lives of hundreds of seamen and passengers without losing a single member of her own crews.

In 1798 Greathead built his second boat, ordered by Hugh, Duke of Northumberland, who placed her at North Shields, and provided an endowment for her maintenance. In 1800 the Duke presented Greathead's third boat to the town of Oporto. Largely through the encouragement of Lloyd's, which in 1802 voted £2000 for the purpose, the building of Life-boats went on, and before the end of 1803 Greathead had built 31 boats—18 for England, 5 for Scotland, and 8 for foreign countries. All were oar-propelled. In 1807 Lukin, the coach-builder, made mankind his debtor by the notable part he took in designing and building the first sailing Life-boat, of the type still most popular on the Norfolk and Suffolk coasts.<sup>1</sup>

### THE LIFE-BOAT MOVEMENT

The part Lloyd's played in the establishment of Life-boats is little known.

By 1825, Life-boats had been established, with the assistance of Lloyd's, at twenty-six different stations, and twenty of these boats were starred in the list as having been recently inspected by Lloyd's Agents and found in good and efficient condition. In at least two instances, and possibly in more, grants had been made for new boats to replace those lost or worn out in service.

After the establishment of the National Institution for the Preservation of Life from Shipwreck (now the National Life-boat Institution) in 1824, Lloyd's seems to have confined itself mainly to small grants from the balance of the £2000 for the repair of boats already established and occasional new Votes to the Institution. Down to that date the provision of Life-boats was largely dependent on the assistance of Lloyd's.<sup>2</sup>

## II. THE NATIONAL INSTITUTION FOR THE PRESERVATION OF LIFE FROM SHIPWRECK

### *Sir William Hillary, Founder.*

The originator of the idea of making the rescue of life from shipwreck a national duty, and the founder of the Institution, was Colonel Sir William Hillary, Bt., a resident in the Isle of Man. He was one of the most remarkable and versatile men of his generation, a man of most generous and humane ideas and deep enthusiasm, with which he combined great powers of exposition and persuasion, and a clear, strong and practical mind.

The many and terrible wrecks which he saw on the stormy coast of the Isle of Man led him to draw up and publish his appeal for the foundation of a national institution to rescue lives from shipwreck.

That appeal remains to this day the most eloquent and the wisest document that has ever been written on Life-boat work. It was more than an appeal. It was a most carefully thought-out plan of what such an institution should be,

<sup>1</sup> *Story of the Life-boat*, R.N.L.I.

<sup>2</sup> *A History of Lloyd's*. Charles Wright and C. F. Fayle. Macmillan, 1928.

to whom it should look for support, and how it should carry on its work. As Sir William Hillary planned the Institution more than a century ago, so, in all the main features of its work, it is to-day. The appeal was published in 1823. By the next year, with the help of Mr. Thomas Wilson, a London merchant and a Member of Parliament for the City, who became the first Chairman of the Committee of the Institution, and held that post for 26 years, Sir William Hillary had succeeded in enlisting the support of all the leading public men of the day.

### *The Men who supported Hillary.*

The official birthday of the Institution was the 4th of March, 1824, when the meeting that called it into existence was held in London. Dr. Manners Sutton, the Archbishop of Canterbury, was Chairman, and Wilberforce the mover of one of the resolutions. Royal patronage was accorded from the start, the then Prime Minister (the Earl of Liverpool) was the first President, and the first Vice-Presidents included Peel, Canning, and Lord John Russell.

For some years the care of mariners after their rescue from shipwreck was undertaken, together with the responsibility for the establishment of mortar and rocket apparatus; but the former charge was taken over in 1854 by the Shipwrecked Fishermen and Mariners' Society, the Institution, on its part, assuming full responsibility for the Life-boats which had been maintained by that Society, while the rocket apparatus was transferred to the Board of Trade in 1855.<sup>1</sup>

### III. PROCEDURE IN CASE OF WRECK

The watching of the coast for wrecks is the duty of H.M. Coastguard, and look outs are placed at important points round the coast. They are connected together by telephone.

On receiving information of a wreck, either from a look out or by wireless, it is the duty of the Coastguard immediately to acquaint the Life-boat Authority. The Life-boat Authority is the Honorary Secretary of the Life-boat Station, who is always on the telephone. It is then the duty of the Honorary Secretary to decide whether to assemble his crew and launch his Life-boat. It is also his duty to inform neighbouring Life-boat Stations of the action taken, and to maintain communication with the Coastguard with a view to obtaining any further information as to the wreck.

The Rocket Life-saving Apparatus is under the Board of Trade.

A Life-boat Crew consists normally of a Coxswain, Second Coxswain, Bowman, and a man for each oar, in the case of pulling and sailing-boats. In the case of a Motor Life-boat, there is a mechanic and an assistant mechanic, and a varying number of additional hands.

The Coxswain, Second Coxswain and Bowman receive yearly retaining fees. The Motor Mechanic is normally a fully-paid man. All members of the crew, except fully-paid men, receive rewards in accordance with a scale whenever they go afloat on service.

All Life-boatmen are fully compensated if they are injured on service, and if they lose their lives their widows and children are pensioned by the Institution on the same scale as if they were soldiers, sailors or airmen of His Majesty's Forces.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Story of the Life-boat, R.N.L.I.*

<sup>2</sup> Supplied through the kindness of the R.N.L.I.



## IV. LIFE-BOAT MEN

No more vivid picture of Life-boat men can well be given than extracts from the children's essays sent in for the Duke of Northumberland's Life-boat Essay Competition.

"It is not enough that he should be strong, he should think nothing of lifting his wife ; nor that he should be healthy,

He must not catch infectious diseases, such as Influenza,

He must not be subject to nervous fits."

He must also "have great buoyancy" ; be able "to free himself from water" ; he must not "be afraid of swallowing waves. In fact, he must know every wave as it passes."

"He is generally happy, and when torrents of rain runs down his neck and nearly devours him up, he is still urged on by the thought of the lives he is going to save."

"Why does he do it ? Not for the honour—who would risk his life for an engraved disc of gold on the end of a piece of gaudy-coloured ribbon—No, he does it out of a sense of duty and pity for those on the wreck."

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**ON THE DRAGON SEAS—continued.**

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